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LECTURES

TO

YOUNG MEN

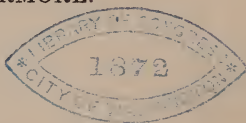
ON THEIR

MORAL DANGERS AND DUTIES.

BY

ABIEL ABBOT LIVERMORE.

II



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TO

THE YOUNG MEN,

BY WHOSE INVITATION THESE LECTURES WERE
WRITTEN,

BEFORE WHOM THEY WERE DELIVERED,

AND AT WHOSE REQUEST THEY ARE NOW PUBLISHED,

THEY ARE

AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED,

BY THEIR FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E .

THE following Lectures were delivered during the past winter, on Sabbath evenings, before the young men of Keene, without distinction of sect or party, at their request. Much, therefore, of the style, and somewhat of the thought, take their form and color from these circumstances of time, place, and local wants and views. But as human life is every where essentially the same in its main characteristics, and as the moral exposures and obligations of early manhood are similar in all places, if not identical, it has been urged by the friends of the lecturer, that these plain counsels and cautions would, probably, do good beyond the sphere for which they were originally prepared. They are, therefore, published, not for the sake of any novelty of principles, or peculiar mode of presenting old and familiar truths, but simply with the hope that they may fall into the hands of here and there a youth, who will read them carefully, and be moved by them to lead a better and happier life. If such should be the result, the highest wishes of the writer will be gratified, and his labor compensated.

KEENE, N. H., *April* 15, 1846.

LECTURE I.

THE MORAL DANGERS OF YOUNG MEN.

I APPEAR before you this evening, my friends and fellow-citizens, not of my own accord, but at the request of others. I come by an invitation received several weeks since from a goodly number of highly respectable young men of this town, without distinction of sect or party, to address them on the subject of their moral dangers and duties. Gladly and gratefully would I seize this and every opportunity to contribute my mite, however small, to the elevation and happiness of those in whom every lover of his country and kind must take so deep an interest. The time and labor, whatever they may be, will be most cheerfully given, if one iota of good can be effected, or if one spark of evil can be extinguished. It is a work of love; and I would invoke all

good thoughts and feelings in the enterprise, and the aid of that Eternal Spirit which coöperates with human endeavors.

But it is a difficult task, it must be confessed, so to address those who are entering on the threshold of manhood as to leave only good impressions, awaken right purposes, and effectually prompt to high duties. What to say, and what to leave unsaid, how to speak conviction to the understanding and persuasion to the heart, demands no little wisdom. The very directness of an appeal may recoil upon itself without effect. Formal harangues often move us less than a casual word. We brace ourselves up against the cannonade of a set exhortation, when a tone or a look might stir the deepest places of the heart. The imperative mode sounds austere to the liberty-loving spirit of youth; and often it can ill brook the seemingly timid counsel that warns of danger, or the authority that imposes duty.

But notwithstanding all these disadvantages attendant upon the position of a lecturer to young men, I feel and shall presume that, in addressing you, I already have your good wishes, and the earnest of a candid

hearing. This is indicated by the very respectful request before referred to, and by the number assembled on this occasion. As one still claiming to be myself a young man, though old enough to know by experience your trials and temptations, your joys and hopes, I would invite your attention to matters of immediate and practical importance. It is my desire that you may forget the speaker in the transcendent interest of the subject, condemn nothing without consideration, accept nothing without reflection, and construe kindly what is kindly intended.

It is needless for us to spend time to discuss the important position which young men occupy, and the momentous influence which they are soon to exert upon their country and mankind. These are trite and common-place thoughts. I need not dwell on the fact of the lofty vantage-ground upon which you of New England stand in comparison with those of your age and sex in any other land. It is the theme of every fourth of July oration. Why, indeed, do all tongues and kindreds of men flock to our shores, unless they here find a more ample and favored sphere of existence? Of the

myriads, which no man can number, that are now emerging from their minority, and assuming their places on the stage of manhood, in all parts of the earth, who can take precedence of you in point of privileges and liberties, means and motives to a noble and happy life? Leaving out of view the boundless wastes of heathen and barbarous regions, it is evident that in the so called civilized and Christian nations of Europe, there are castes and classes, old feudal usages and institutions, that throw an almost overwhelming weight on the generous ambition of youth. As a man is born, so he must live and die. His condition is cast in iron, and the elastic spring of improvement is never allowed to uncoil and act. The accident of an accident has decided for him most of the great questions of life. But before the youth of America a field is spread out as rich and illimitable as the prairies of the west. Art, enterprise, ambition, breathe an air as free as the winds of heaven, and draw upon resources as inexhaustible as the fountains of our mighty rivers and lakes. Enjoying as we do such untrammelled liberty, it is incumbent on us

to beware lest freedom may degenerate into license ; and, blessed as we are with the possession of the inalienable rights of life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness, to take care lest we may neglect our most solemn duties.

In delivering this course of lectures, the object will be to select such topics as will be most interesting and profitable ; those that come home to our business and our bosoms. Theories are beautiful ; but they do little good while they lie like clouds along the high heaven, however gloriously they may shine ; only as they descend in the gentle rain, and the copious shower of nourishing wisdom and inspiring motives, do they become practically useful to society.

While I would speak under the dictates of perfect kindness, I would speak with entire fearlessness. The character and happiness of the young require plain and frank dealing, and the spirit of youth ever loves, I am happy to believe, such ingenuousness. He cannot be your friend who only flatters with fair and pleasant words, and covers up the wound instead of probing it. My desire is not to please, so much as

to do you good. But if I utter censure, it will be untinctured with ill-will; and my warnings will be dictated by the single wish to put you on your guard against evils, just as real, though not as apparent, as sickness or a fractured limb.

The subject of the present lecture is the temptations and moral dangers of young men in village life. The following remarks would also apply, probably, with slight variations, to most other latitudes and longitudes of the country, if not the city.

The young are prone to Recklessness of Character, and impatience under restraint. Not a few think it manly and honorable to disdain advice, and to spurn at control. This is natural to their quick feelings and ardent hopes. Little acquainted by experience with the actual troubles and perils of human life, they are prone to think their way is the best, and to do that which is right in their own eyes. Perhaps this very state of mind will lead some to regard with less favor the present course of remarks. They may deem them officious, and think they interfere unnecessarily with the tastes, habits, and pleasures, of those to whom they

are addressed. But do we not, however old or experienced, need from time to time the voice of friendly warning? We are all liable to go astray, and we ought not to deem that the hand of an enemy which leads us back into the true way.

The recklessness of youth is proverbial, and there is generally no weaker point in the character of opening manhood. But what renders this fault more difficult of cure is, that it springs from the popular qualities of spirit, courage, enterprise. These in themselves are noble, and sit like a diadem on the brow of the young man; but when suffered to have free scope, hardly any thing can be more perilous to virtue.

Watch, therefore, against the excess. Pause, and ponder your course of conduct. Remember that "discretion is the better part of valor," and match your words with noble deeds. Think it not unmanly to "hear the instruction of your father, and forsake not the law of your mother," though you may have passed beyond the limits of pupilage. Reflect that in schools and higher seminaries of instruction, nothing is more graceful than a cheerful obedi-

ence to the powers that be, and that he who would be sovereign even over himself, much more over others, must first be subject. Respect the laws and wholesome regulations of public order, and beware, on all occasions, of giving countenance to those who would unchain the passions, and let them prey upon society in all manner of turmoil and disorder. Before resolving on an important step in life, be not ashamed to consult with your friends. Even if you do not follow their advice, it will be of great service in pointing out to you dangers, or in suggesting advantages, which you had not anticipated.

Beware, therefore, of a reckless spirit, as one of the deadliest foes to your peace and prosperity. It will involve you in inextricable difficulties. It will prompt the hasty word, or perhaps the angry blow, for which you will afterwards feel the keenest regret, and whose stain not all the sweet rains of heaven may be able to wash white. Recklessness in business hurries on the failure of ninety-seven out of every hundred, who enter upon mercantile life. Recklessness in the intercourse of society hatches bitter feuds,

and leaves many a cureless sting of jealousy to rankle in irritated minds. It separates fast friends by an instant stroke, and shatters the slowly-forming confidence of good men in your worth and ability. Who has not lamented with tears the hot word and the impetuous action? The work of a moment has been the repentance of a lifetime. In a word, simple recklessness of character often does all the mischief of downright, malicious wickedness. The disposition expressed by the common phrase, "I don't care," never yet made any body wise, rich, good, or happy; but it has made many foolish, needy, vicious, and wretched.

And, in a community like ours, where there is the largest liberty and the least restraint, there is especial danger from this quarter; more, perhaps, than in lands of more rigid laws and customs. There is danger — and every young person that looks to his own best welfare will be thankful to have the alarm-note sounded — that, in the sanguine spirits of youth, and with the exhilarating applause of boon companions, he may go too fast and too far. He may be led on, in the indulgence of a reckless disregard of the

rights and feelings of others, to be guilty of conduct which will imbitter with a distinct woe every future day of his existence.

The very independence of spirit connected with recklessness tends to make it a most fascinating quality in the eyes of unthinking youth. They admire the fearless bearing, the untamable energy, the indignant sense of freedom. Be on the alert, therefore, against a temptation that comes clothed in light. Discriminate between sterling courage and heedless bravado. Reflect that it requires no great genius to plunge into difficulties, but a true heroism to breast them.

Next in order, and akin to recklessness, may be set down, as one of the besetting temptations of the young man, the proneness to admire what is Smart rather than what is Right. As the last-mentioned danger was the elevation of the animal impulses over the other faculties, so this is the preëminence of the intellectual over the moral nature. It is the admiration of what is showy, rather than of solid truth, the preference of greatness to goodness. It is the same disposition, carried out, that makes men less willing to be thought weak than wicked. This

fault may not be limited, any more than the former one, to one sex or age, but the impassioned spirit of youth is more likely to make the mistake. It is the vice of the world, and the inexperienced only drink a deeper draught of the insane cup. It is this that leads men to enroll higher on the record of immortality their warriors than their writers, and their writers than their saints. Passion is put before intellect, intellect is exalted above the moral nature. Bonaparte first, and Washington second; Byron first, and Cowper second; proud Lucifer before the humble carpenter of Nazareth.

The admiration for mere greatness, irrespective of the good or ill qualities with which it is allied, is a dangerous sentiment. The ambition to be reputed smart and talented, no matter at what hazard, or by what means, is ruining great numbers of promising young men in our country, and making not a few very ridiculous. Reverence for genius is a worthy and an honorable homage to one of the most dazzling gifts of the Creator. But when, in our admiration of bold and brilliant qualities, we suffer it to blind our eyes to glaring vices, and lead us to honor

mere intellectual power more than spiritual elevation of soul, we reverse the standard set up by the Creator, who has placed the moral nature at the head, and assigned it the dominion not only over the earthly appetites, but also over the mental capacities. So too, in rising higher, it is not the crowning attribute of the Deity himself, that his power is irresistible, and his wisdom unerring, but that his mercy endureth forever. His most frequent name is God, that is, "the Good." In our judgments of men, and our own structure of character, conscience should go before reason, as much as reason goes before passion and appetite.

The false judgment now described would be comparatively harmless, were it not allowed to shape the aims of life, and to prescribe the choice of companions. It is selected for remark on account of its noxious practical influence in early life. The witty are chosen before the wise, the brilliant rather than the well-principled. In the French we have an instance of a national character formed on such a basis. And in all history and poetry, in the classics which are studied in our colleges, and in

the modern Satanic school of literature, so termed, this unfavorable bias of youth is unhappily too much fostered. But as it is at war with the character of God and the spirit of Christianity, the young man who proposes to himself the noblest style of conduct, will ever accord to the moral sentiment the highest place in his respect, and while he is dazzled with the feats of the animal warrior, and the intellectual genius, will yet bend in lowly veneration before the saintly heroes of the right, and the good, who gave up their lives at the stake, and on the scaffold, rather than swerve a hair's breadth from being true to God and their own souls.

While, in most respects, the moral dangers of young men have increased with the advancing refinement of society, in one point we are happy in believing that they have diminished. The charm of the Cup is broken. The spell of Circe is dissolved. The gross abominations of these sensual indulgences have been revealed; the arithmetic of woe has been computed; and men have been somewhat awakened to the danger of this mother of sins. The Reformation which, commencing in good New England,

has circumnavigated the globe, has insured to some extent the sobriety of the youth of our community. They are not met at the evening party with the tempting offer of a glass of wine from the hand of beauty. Their companions do not so readily laugh them out of their good resolutions. The aged, with a fatal reverse of wisdom, do not so generally tempt them to a practice which has ruined successive generations. They are not waylaid and ambushed at every corner by the Protean shapes and snares of the worst Satan that man has ever yet seen. Nobly, too, have our young men appreciated the blessing and rallied round the banner of Total Abstinence from all that can intoxicate. They have confessed the strength of the temperance argument, and yielded to the persuasion of the temperance appeal. But having done much, and well served, so to speak, their apprenticeship, it is hoped that they will now engage as journeymen and as master mechanics, and build up the temple of Temperance to its pinnacle.

For to purify the community of this evil, that cries to Heaven, is a work which will demand all the generous devotion of

our youth, as well as the ripe sagacity of mature manhood and old age. Upon you, young men, it rests in a great measure to say whether intemperance shall still destroy wholesale the peace and prosperity of families, degrade some of the brightest minds in the community to the lowest depths of depravity and woe, and entail on the future the murder, robbery, and suicide of the past. Many are still tottering on the brink of ruin, or hastening forward to the precipice of instant destruction. Even some of your own age are now contracting the dangerous habit. They scorn the idea of intemperance ; it is but one glass ; it is moderate drinking ; it is sociability ; it is a proper spirit of independence ; it is for the sake of “auld lang syne ;” it is good cheer ; it is superiority to the superstitious fears of parents and friends. But whoever lives to see the afterpiece, will see “another sight.” It devolves on you to scatter these lying pretexts to the winds. They have cheated and ruined the flower of youth, generation after generation. Let them no longer deceive and destroy. Break the spell of the wine-cup, as that of the rum-bottle has been broken. The clear, earnest,

and powerful voice of young men only needs to be raised, as — thank Heaven — it has been raised once and again, to plead for this cause, and it will as surely go on as the stars in their courses. A mighty influence is lodged in your hands, and for the use of that influence you are responsible in the sight of God and man. The ten talents have been given to you, and for ten you must render account. Society is looking to you for the signal of advancement and of victory. While the old behold with failing hopes the plans of reformation, and predict that the world is growing worse, it is to you, in whose youthful veins the blood dances to livelier measures, and thrills with all the animation of hopes unchilled, we turn in expectation of active and persevering efforts to subdue the most gigantic adversary to human happiness.

No observer of society at the present day can fail to notice a decay, to some extent, of that spirit of Reverence, which once, like the wings of a guardian angel, brooded over society in New England. The authority of parents and teachers is less respected than formerly. Men hesitate not to speak “evil

of dignities," and the names of our rulers are bandied about by the press as a football, at which every one must give a kick. The style of address is not, You are as good as I, but, I am as good as you. The evil has gone farther, and higher, and deeper; it has climbed up into heaven, and laid the hand of profaneness upon the throne of the living God, and gone down into the abyss, and plucked up the vocabulary of the damned to insert it in the dialect of everyday conversation. It tears the crown of honor from the brow of the Redeemer, to cast it into the slough of filthy and abusive speech. We can scarcely pass a knot of men or boys in the street, without having our ears tingle with pain at the ribald oath and the Heaven-defying curse. It is common as air; men drink it like water. When the schoolboy is let loose from the instruction of useful knowledge, and the drill of a noble mental discipline, too often he is heard pouring forth a volley of profane words; poor return for the unparalleled privileges he enjoys as a child of freedom. When the laborer is pursuing his work on a soil

which richly repays every effort, and surrounded by ever-speaking mementoes of God in the living air, the flowing waters, and the holy light of heaven, how often, alas ! do we hear him vent his impatience or his anger, in terms at which angels weep and demons rejoice ! When the young man pursues his honorable and lucrative business under the smiles of a benignant Providence, and the protection of just laws, and the approving opinion of his fellow-men, his frame knit with the perfect strength of manhood, his cheek red with painless health, his home graced by love and the pledges of hope,—all things bright, and happy, and excellent, lavished upon his path, and throwing their radiance over the future,—how horrible the inconsistency, that this being, so favored of God and man, so loved, and watched over, and regarded, should use as his habitual style of conversation the language of the pit,—at which woman turns pale, and friends shudder,—and over which God rolled the thunders of Mount Sinai, in words graven upon stone, and handed down to all future ages ; “Thou shalt not take

the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain"!

Such a custom is no mark of a gentleman any more than it is of a Christian. It is as far from good manners as it is from good morals. It brands a man at once in the eyes of all good judges as low-bred and vulgar, though he may wear broadcloth and gold. The first profane lisp reveals his want of true politeness as much as of correct principle.

I appeal to you, my young friends, to guard against this almost universal vice of irreverence and profaneness, to set a purer example, and to introduce a better fashion. I call upon you to rectify the public opinion of your class, and age, and sex, in this respect. I ask you to reflect upon the sin and the folly of so depraved a habit. I implore you, if ever subject to it yourselves, to ask what is its nature, use, and effects, and to resist it, and conquer it, as the whisper of an evil spirit. I invoke your aid in promoting among your younger brothers, and companions, and fellow-workmen, the doctrine of total abstinence from this immo-

rality. I urge teachers to guard their schools from this moral contamination. I beseech parents to keep a vigilant eye on the forming characters of their children, that this element of poison be not incorporated into the constitution of life. I call upon guardians and masters kindly to warn their wards and apprentices of this moral danger, as I have known some nobly do, as alike ruinous to character and respectability. In no particular is there a more bold and public defiance of the laws of God, and man too, — for there is a public statute sleeping among the laws against profaneness, — than in the custom under consideration ; and in no respect is there needed a more earnest and universal Reformation. May man in all good fidelity, and Heaven in its mercy, speed the better day !

But I pass on to speak of Purity of thought and conduct. For wise and obvious reasons the Creator has implanted in our breasts certain powerful passions. Their legitimate use is for the welfare of the individual and the world. But they need the hand and eye of a master. They are instincts, and therefore act blindly and impetuously, and they will

run the character aground, unless reason and conscience sit at the helm. To preserve the mind "pure in its last recesses," and to guard all "the chambers of imagery" from pollution, is a duty second to none other in the catalogue of youthful responsibilities. The spirit of innocence, once driven away, will never return. The tempter of impurity, when once admitted into the heart, will leave the slimy trail of the serpent upon every flower of paradise, and break forever the exquisite charm of that "heaven which lies about us in our infancy." There is a dark flood pouring over the land, which is engulfing thousands and tens of thousands of the young in its waters of death. Too often, alas! the fashions of society, the customs of social intercourse, and the brilliant charms of poetry and fiction, enter into alliance with the enemy. Who shall recount the health undermined, the reason destroyed, the main-spring of manhood broken, the bitterness steeping the whole soul of the victims of this vice?

Shun, my friends, the licentious book or play, as reeking with a deadly contagion. Hold your breath, and pass lightly and

quickly over the foul passages strown over the works even of some of the greatest poets and writers, as the traveller hastens carefully across the dizzy rope bridges of the Andes, that swing over gulfs a thousand feet deep. Like rust upon the bright steel, the taint of impurity leaves a stain upon the soul that can scarcely ever be wholly effaced. Guard well your thoughts and imaginations from indulgence in the forbidden habit. There is a law against the sale of licentious pictures ; guard your soul against having any such pictures hung up in its hallowed temple. Give no welcome to the sly jest, or the vulgar innuendo. Let the vocabulary of your words, as well as the register of your thoughts, be free from all manner of obscenity. Pardon me for thus speaking freely of one of the most fearful moral dangers which can beset the path of the young man. The hearts of multitudes will bear me witness that it is against no imaginary evil I ask you to be on your guard, but one leading down to the chambers of death.*

In this connection may be appropriately

* Appendix, A.

introduced some caution in the use of Books. There is a literature now abroad among men whose breath is pestilential as the vapors of the Campagna. It cannot be touched without defilement. It cannot be read without certain peril and injury. It is the "yellow" literature, so called, and it deserves the name, for it is destitute of any green thing. It goes under the name of "cheap" literature; but dear will it prove to him who drags his mind through its polluting mire. It is printed poison. It is the literal, not figurative printer's devil. I have told its history, when I say that it chiefly comes from Paris, though some of it is the product of minds in our own country. I know that I am not warning you of an unknown and imaginary danger, for there is an immense quantity of it sold in the United States, and its immoral influence must be extensive and powerful in drugging the youthful mind with ingredients more fatal than any contained in the *materia medica* of the apothecary. It lurks in hidden places in the cities, it creeps into the villages. Beware of it more than the sting of the adder, and flee from it as from the rattlesnake.

But, independently of this vile trash, there is hardly any mistake young men are more apt to make than in their reading. They often have but little time to devote to this means of self-culture. But that makes it not less, but more imperative that they should select good books; histories in preference to novels, and biographies before plays, and essays rather than songs. It is the habit of using your leisure time in liberal studies, and in the acquisition of useful knowledge, which will aid you more than any thing else in taking a high stand in your calling, whatever it may be, and in preparing you to act your part honorably as American citizens. Seize every moment you can get in treasuring up a knowledge of the history and laws of your country, of the art or occupation you pursue, of general science, natural history and philosophy, ethics, and last, but not least, of theology; which, as an aged farmer once remarked to me, he had found to be "a most happifying study." Let not your love of this mental and moral improvement ever flag. Let a generous desire of useful knowledge always burn in your veins.

Let some time every day, one or two or more hours, if possible, — if that is not practicable, at least half an hour, — be devoted, with religious strictness, to this elevation of the mind. Always have on hand some “books which are books,” and which you will not be ashamed to have it known you are reading; keep by you, for the spare moments, some work that will enkindle the never-dying intellect with great thoughts, and fire the immortal soul with magnanimous sentiments. This will be investing capital where thieves cannot break through and steal it, and that will yield a steady and constantly-increasing dividend of happiness and usefulness.

The only remaining point upon which time will allow me now to speak, is, of the proper observance of the Sabbath. That there is a great temptation to abuse the day of sacred rest, is apparent to all who live in this community. That there are many, both young and old, who are living in direct violation of that commandment which says, “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,” is too plain to need proof. And that there is a disposition on

the part of some, though I hope not many young men, to misspend the day, must be my reason for the present remarks. Living, as many do, away from their homes, and no longer under the vigilant care of their parents, and in the wholesome atmosphere of the affections of brothers and sisters, they are in danger of making the Lord's day a holiday rather than a holy day. When they meet their associates, a walk is proposed into the fields or woods, or a ride to some neighboring town, during the hours of public worship. In such cases, it requires more moral firmness than most young persons possess to utter a decided No. Indeed, the easy acquiescence of disposition which is always inclined, on such occasions, to say, Yes, has resulted in the decline and fall of many a hopeful youth. Some, likewise, are tempted to resort to their ordinary places of business, to the workshop, or store, or office, and there gathering their associates, to while away the blessed hours of the Sabbath in novel reading or trivial conversation, or in sports and plays wholly at variance with the true use of the day. If an investigation were made

into this subject, I presume all would be astonished at the results which would be disclosed, of the violations of the Sabbath, the non-attendance upon public worship, and the desecration of the day of Heaven by questionable amusements, on the part of not a few of our youth. Far be it from me to bring an unjust or railing accusation against any, and least of all against those whom I would benefit, and not injure. But I speak from well-authenticated knowledge, and I appeal to the intelligence of those who hear me, if there is not a disregard of the Sabbath in the beautiful villages of our land, and among this favored community, which should excite our anxiety, if not alarm. For I know of no one test that more certainly determines the future prospects of a young man, than simply his observance or non-observance of the Sabbath. And wherever there is open and habitual neglect of this day, you may anticipate, with almost the certainty of the morrow's sun, moral degradation, idleness, dissipation, and final ruin. How many a criminal has pointed to this, as the opening wedge of all immoralities and crimes! How have I

heard the dying man, in the last paroxysms of disease, harrow up his soul with the bitter remembrances of his misspent Sabbaths ! The blessed light of love and rest all about him, and he cold and rebellious, trampling on the wise regulations of human society, and defying the commandment of his God ! It is a fearful fate. Happy would it be, if those who are taking the same road would turn about before they reach the same destination !

It is my solemn conviction, that no man violates habitually the day which his Creator has commanded him to remember and keep holy, without exposing himself to certain loss of character. From observation, and from reading, which gives the fruits of others' observation, I am as well persuaded as I can be of any truth, that every Sabbath-breaker is also, more than other men, exposing himself to temporal losses and injuries, as well as to moral declension and downfall. This law is ingrained in our flesh and blood, as well as upon the everlasting tablets of the spirit ; and woe, woe will be to him that thinks to put aside the finger of the Almighty, and go his own wild way.

The habit of attending public worship, as connected with the observance of the Sabbath, is also of vital consequence. I am happy to believe that a good portion of the young men of our community are in the habitual discharge of this duty to God and their own immortal natures. But there are exceptions, and many may be liable at times to negligence in this respect, and need a word of admonition or encouragement. It is important that every one should have some regular place of worship. I do not stand here to recommend to you to go to this church or to that, but to attend habitually and punctually at some church, the church of your faith and choice ; or, if none such offer itself, then at that one most in harmony with your own feelings. Every one should have his seat, and that seat should be filled on every returning Sabbath. And not only attend to this duty yourselves, but as companions and friends, as social beings, and therefore exerting an untold influence over one another, invite others to join you, and walk to the house of God in company. There is, as all witnesses testify, an increasing respect

and observance in this land for the holy day. It is an omen of incalculable good. But it depends upon those now taking their places in life to decide, in a great measure, whether this reformation shall go forward. I invoke the ingenuous spirit of youth, and I do it with confidence, to promote and uphold an institution which, in terms not too strong, has been called "the right hand of God."

But I turn from young men to others, to entreat their coöperation in this important work. A solemn duty, and one which they cannot shake off, devolves upon parents, and in this community, especially, on guardians and masters. In the first place, they ought to see that their own example is unexceptionable. And next, they should provide pleasant homes for those under their care, and furnish a good supply of interesting and useful books; that there may be less temptation to resort to the shop or store on the day of rest, and, in company with their associates, to spend the time in levity and sport. They ought to aid them to attend public worship habitually, to take pains that they do not go unprovided with

seats, and be obliged to depend on the chance generosity of a friend ; and if they are not better sons, apprentices, and wards for all this care, all observation is false, all witnesses deceive. I hesitate not to say, that there is culpable remissness in duty where these things are neglected ; and those who have taken no pains to mould and elevate the characters of those committed to their care, and laboring for them, must not be surprised to see vice and insubordination breaking out like a flood. What should we think of that master or guardian, who looks only to the pecuniary advantage to be derived from the lads placed with him to learn a trade, and to prepare for a useful and honorable life ; and that, too, at the most impressible and critical period of youth, when the spirits are lively and pleasure is tempting ; and takes no pains to promote their intellectual and moral welfare, and to make them not only good hatters, or saddlers, or bookbinders, or printers, or clerks, but real men, worthy of their country and of their age ! We rejoice that there are some in this community who could be mentioned, who faithfully and fearlessly discharge their

duty in this respect, and who are worthy of all honor for the noble stand they have always maintained on this point, and for their unwearied exertions for the good behavior of those under their charge, and their improvement and preparation for life's future scenes. May they be multiplied a hundred fold; and may they experience, in the regard which is paid them by many whom they have fitted for respectability and usefulness, as well as for a successful pursuit of business, an abundant reward for all their care and fearless discharge of duty!

But not to dwell further on the duties of the Sabbath, learn to regard and love it, my friends, as a great and blessed privilege. Welcome with delight the return of its hallowed hours, which breathe peace and rest over this toiling world. Discern in its appointment the wisdom and mercy of Him who knoweth our frame. Associate with it all happy and holy thoughts. Study to use it as a precious gift, bestowed by the Most High for your present relief and your eternal blessedness. And be assured, that, if you make it a fixed rule to

attend public worship on this day, to read first the Holy Scriptures, and then such other books as shall explain, enforce, and impel you to perform your duties to God and man, to your own soul, and to your Savior; if you habituate yourselves to doing good on this day, as you may have the ability and the opportunity, among the poor, the sick, and the afflicted, or in the noble enterprises of moral reformation and philanthropy; if you faithfully employ the proper hours for private prayer, self-inquiry, and devout meditation, —exercises which no young person can omit without suffering deterioration of character, — then you will experience that it is, indeed, the first and best day of the week. It will dawn upon you as one of the veritable days of heaven; its hours will prove as golden links, binding your souls more closely to duty, happiness, and God; and you will see, with all the feelings with which you bid farewell to a friend, its tranquil sun setting behind the western mountains.

LECTURE II.

THE MORAL DANGERS OF YOUNG MEN.

IN my former lecture, after alluding to the unexampled blessings enjoyed by the young in this country, I laid before you some of the moral dangers which beset their path. I propose, on the present occasion, to describe others not less in magnitude nor less fatal in their influence upon those who do not guard against them. I believe them to be real, not imaginary dangers. They are not the bugbears conjured up of a winter's eve by a morbid apprehension, but the stern and real foes of broad daylight and every-day life. They do not come, indeed, with "note of preparation," and clothed in a tangible shape of flesh and blood; they would be less to be dreaded if they did. But they steal, creep, dart, spring upon their victim in the moment of fancied security. They

meet him in the retired chamber and on the sidewalk ; in the hours of labor and business, and within the social circle. Though they may present no hideous or disgusting appearance to the mind's eye, but glide in among the thoughts like angels of light, they are in truth just as substantial enemies to your peace, as if they entered the village in martial array, and, penetrating your homes, and shops, and offices, struck to the heart the mortal blow. Do we not every where meet the victims of this moral warfare — wounded and crippled, like the survivors of some old war, and bearing in face and form the marks and scars of battle ? You, my young friends, may deem your fresh and glorious youth invulnerable to these attacks ; but so thought once those who are now suffering the consequences of their sins in mind and in body. They scoffed at the idea of danger. They mocked at fear. They never dreamed, or only dreamed, that they should ever become the poor battered and broken-down beings, who crossed their path, with despairing hearts and ruined characters, tottering with dissipation and disease to a loathsome grave. They staked their youth

against the world, and lost the play. Hope was gay, and ambition was high, and they heeded not the peril. They enlisted in the army, and marched to the battle-field without the shield and helmet of principle and prayer; and when the tremendous shock came, and the enemy charged home with all his allied forces, they fell, and great was their fall. The noble chivalry of youth, the flower of opening manhood, the towering crest of glory, went down in the tumult of the fight, and were trodden into the dust by the rushing legions of destruction. No danger! It is the stratagem of the adversary. It is the lure to betrayal. Be on the alert, that you do not give heed to the false words. There *is* danger; and you cannot be too early, or constantly, or keenly alive to it. When it will do for the sailor to hoist every sail, and head his ship to the iceberg; when it will be thought generalship for the commander to encamp his forces in the presence of the well-appointed army of his foe without guard or trenches; when the physician has learned to defy disease, and take no precautions for its removal or resistance;—then, and not till then, will it do to scout at

the warning of danger in youth. What is experience, indeed, but a powerful witness to the value of circumspection! What is the Past but a recorded journal of admonitions for the Future! What are the unwritten memoirs and biographies of our friends and neighbors, but so many lessons engraven upon the heart, to warn us of the path of ruin!

And if there be moral peril of various kinds, and fearful amount, encompassing our way, it is not cowardice, it is courage, to confess it; it is manliness to meet it prepared. It is true, to use the simile of Coleridge, that "our own experience is a light in the stern of the vessel, which only shows the dangers which have been past," not those which are to come; but the experience of others, would we only heed it, could throw a light forward as well as backward upon our path over the dark waters.

The first snare to the virtue of the young, which I shall now speak of, is included under the terms Fashion and Popularity. You are often told to beware of bad associates, for "evil communications corrupt good manners." The temptation is great, the advice

is good. The choice of companions is oftentimes the hinge on which the whole character turns. Whether you associate with these or with those young persons, may make all the difference between success and ruin. You take great pains in the selection of a ring or a watch, which is to be your ornament through life ; how much more needful to choose such friends as will perpetually breathe upon you a good influence ! For there is a constant process of assimilation going on between those who are bound in the ties of mutual love and intimacy. But these topics are familiar to all ; let us turn to the one already mentioned, which is seldom considered, the public opinion of youth — the judgment and cast of feeling prevailing among those of your own age and class. This exerts a powerful influence either for good or evil. It is more certain in its effect than the opinion of all the rest of mankind, because it is near, and closes all over and around the young man. He breathes it, and drinks it. It is well nigh omnipotent to control his opinions and actions. He can set at nought the feelings of all other men more easily than the standard of what is fashion-

able and popular in his clique of ten, twenty, or forty young friends and acquaintances. If they are accustomed to act in a certain way, he must do the same. If any practice or amusement is in vogue among them, he must conform or lose caste. If they drink, he must drink. If they swear, he must swear. If they gamble, he must gamble. If they break the Sabbath, he must do the same. Men often wonder that their good advice to the young has so little apparent effect. The secret is contained in a nutshell. It is because this despotic public opinion of the school, shop, bar-room, or coterie, utterly neutralizes all that may be said by parents, guardians, and lecturers. They hear the good word of truth, and it has a momentary impression; but they turn the next corner, and meet with a group of their associates, and the first laugh or sneer will scatter it to the winds. They can stand cannon-balls easier than that formidable artillery. Correct that public opinion which prevails among the young, and which makes it honorable and manly to do what in the eyes of the rest of society is both unmanly and dishonorable, and the whole work

is done. It is an age when truth is liable to be estimated by votes, and principles decided by majorities. What is popular is too often regarded as synonymous with right, and legal as another term for lawful. We are governed, in this country, by public opinion, from the youngest to the oldest, and therefore the necessity that, in all quarters, that opinion should be pure and high-toned. I call upon you, young men, to elevate the public sentiment that prevails among you, and in a great measure governs you. For if corrupt, it will corrupt you ; but if sound, it will be a shield to your virtue. But never yield up to it one conviction of the heart, one dictate of conscience. It is a tyrant ; and, if you would not be a slave, you must not be afraid to stand alone with the right, rather than “follow a multitude to do evil.” One whisper of an approving conscience is sweeter music than all the thunders of applause ; one pang of remorse, sharper than the hisses of a thousand opponents. Be true ; be independent. Have strength of mind enough to mould the opinion of your class and age to what you feel to be right, and not be warped and crooked

by it to practices you loathe. Sooner cut off a right hand, or pluck out a right eye, than tamely crouch to meanness or vice for the pitiful reward of pleasing those with whom you live, or with whom you are associated, at the expense of making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience. There is no greater spectacle of moral grandeur, than a young man rising above the petty follies, and the vile habits, with which he may be beset, and, true as the needle to the pole, daring singly to be just ; and in time, by the force of character, and in the exercise of a fearless moral courage, elevating the public opinion of his fellows to the lofty standard of truth and right. Tell me not of the laurels of the conqueror ; they are crimsoned with blood and wet with tears. Tell me not of the fame of rulers and statesmen ; it is often purchased by fearful sacrifices of truth and compromises of duty. Give me in preference the crown of honor, which that young man wins and wears, who has held fast his integrity and dared to be free.

I pass to the consideration of another danger to your characters and happiness — the love of Amusements. I am not about to

utter any tirade against proper recreations. The spirit of youth delights in pastime. The heart beats quick time. The limbs are elastic, and the nerves thrill to the touch of pleasure. The bosom runs over with gladness. All sounds are music, all sights beauty, all experiences fresh and enchanting ; companion meets companion, and joy speaks from eye to eye, and from heart to heart. And I as much believe that the kind Crèator of so much joy intended that the young should have their pleasures, as he did that the squirrel should skip and the robin sing. I should as soon think of attempting to stop the flowers from blooming, and the fields and woods from growing green, as of laying an embargo upon all the amusements of youth. They are refreshments by the dusty road-side of life. They are enliveners of the spirits and social feelings. All ought to have their recreations, if they would not grow superannuated before their time. The question is not, therefore, as it has been unfortunately stated, sometimes, between amusements and no amusements, but between those which are harmless and those that are hurtful. But, with all this keen zest of youth

for pleasure, and with its rainbow hopes, it is plain, that the critical danger is in the too much, not in the too little. And without entering into a long discussion here as to the various popular amusements of our country, upon which there is much difference of opinion, let me say that, when they endanger the health, absorb much time, break up the regular routine of duty, and give one a distaste for the quiet of home and for common every-day labors ; when they are more expensive than our means will justify ; when they are of questionable moral tendency in society, and occupy the heart with sensual enjoyments, to the exclusion of the love of God and the practice of virtue, it is time to pause and ask one's self where all this will end. The world is not so barren of beauty and of bliss, that we must, to recreate our spirits, drink of the foul sediment of corrupt pleasure. When every sunbeam is winged with glory, and every snow-flake drops down as if it were a benediction from the skies ; when, in our daily walks, so much of gladness meets us at every turn ; when, even in our labors of hand and head, there is often mingled so much of still, steady happiness ;

when, in our homes, the air is so full of love and enjoyment ; when, in music, in books, in innocent sports and games, in the walk, the ride, the social festivity, such ample and various means are provided for all reasonable exhilaration, who would, in his better moments, wish to plunge into the giddy whirl of fashionable dissipation ? The laugh may be louder ; but it will leave a scowl behind. The jest may be broader ; but it will dissolve the charm of innocence. The draught may be deeper ; but it descends to the dregs of the cup. The pleasure may be exquisite for the moment ; but, “ at the last, it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder.” Who has not paid for seconds of delight with hours of remorse ? It is the farthest from my wish or effort to diminish one drop of the cup of youthful happiness ; but my sole desire is, to keep that crystal goblet of the true elixir of life from being spilled in youth, so that it may contain a cordial for the graver scenes of manhood and age. It is a pleasant sight to see the happiness of the brute creation, the gambols of the calf, and the friskings of the lambs ; and to hear the lively songs of birds ; but how much

more beautiful to see children and youth, full of joy and laughter, in their innocent recreations! If any thing of the paradise of Eden has survived in the earth, you may see a gleam of it in a group of happy youths, and be ready to say, Surely the tempter has not yet come. O that he would never come, and dash all this bliss into a thousand pieces! And the very question involved in this subject of amusements is, What shall make the happy always happy, the young always young, if not in body, yet in spirit? Where is the secret of eternal youth and beauty hidden, but in the temple of virtue? "Reverence," says a wise German, "the dreams of your childhood." They have more in them than the world gives them credit for. And, if not falsified by the base indulgences of the senses, and the dizzy round of corrupting pleasures, they will be succeeded by increasing prophecies of good, and by ever-brightening glimpses of the grand possibilities of your being.

I have already, on a previous occasion, touched upon the temptations of drinking, which are connected with the love of amusement and excitement in youth, and I pass

now to consider some other dangers to "mind, body, or estate," from the same source. The first is Gambling. This evil may not be very general, but it is certainly very powerful, and perhaps more general than many suppose. The mischiefs arising from this practice are so often portrayed, that vain would it be for me to add brightness to the sun, or speed to the lightning; for, evident as the one, and terrible as the other, are the scathings of this vice. Whatever of pecuniary gain there may perchance be in the few, rare, and most successful cases, is outweighed, a thousand fold, by the wreck of moral principle. But, as an almost universal rule, gambling is the short road to poverty no less than vice. There is no real increase of property. There is no equitable transfer of it, as in barter, trade, and labor. What is gained is gained without equivalent, and what is lost is lost without compensation. It is but an honorable kind of robbery, an accredited swindling. Say not that those only play, who choose the sport. The young and unwary are drawn into the excitement by the bait of temporary success. No artifice is thought unfair in this work of de-

pravity. The dice are loaded, the cards are marked, the tables are prepared, the tallies are corrupted, to cheat the simple youth. Let any one read Green's "Gambling Unmasked," written by one who had pursued the business for years, and he will see that no stratagem is left untried to entrap those who have money, and draw them into the vortex of ruin. The places of this infamy in the cities are appropriately called "hells." They may be elegantly fitted up with Brussels carpets, rose-wood tables, mahogany chairs, and magnificent mirrors and lamps; the board may be crowned with glittering piles of gold and silver coin; and none may be seen in the establishment but handsomely dressed and polite gentlemen; but, notwithstanding all these fair appearances, they are "hells" in reality; "hells" of ruin, of remorse, and death.

It may seem needless to speak of this subject here. There are no such places in our quiet country villages. True, there are not. But there is gambling here; there is the play for money; none can deny that; and though it is begun in an humble way, in the bowling-alley or at the card-table, it does

not end here. The passion once gratified grows stronger ; the habit, being formed, coils round and round the young man, like the monstrous snake around Laocoön, until he is bound hand and foot. Many of our young men are flocking to the cities to seek fame and fortune. I can recount numbers who have thus left this place and the vicinity within the last ten years. And whatever they have done a little of in the country, of that they will be likely to do much more in the city. If they have sipped here, they will drink there. If they walked here, they will run there. If they have spent one dollar in gambling in the country village, they are prepared to spend one hundred in Boston and New York, in the same way. Are these visionary evils ? You know they are not. You know the old and oft-repeated tale of play, lottery tickets, and amusements ; the clerk defrauding his master, and purloining goods and money to support his follies ; and then the afterpiece of suicide or the State Prison. In no respect is it more necessary than here to “resist the beginnings” of evil. Our young men, going forth as they do every year to our rapidly increasing cities on

the seaboard, and to the south and the west, need the whole panoply of virtue ; for no parent can tell to what fearful temptations they may not be exposed, of the gambler and the strange woman — of the intoxicating cup and the midnight debauch. Gambling is the forerunner to a host of vices ; and he who began to play for a cent or a sixpence may end in staking his soul on the giddy chances of the game, and wrecking at once his temporal and eternal felicity.

In this connection, I cannot forbear advertising to one practice which is very fashionable in the land, but which many would doubtless be happy to be well rid of, if they could summon up moral resolution enough to break their chains. It is a custom which, as has been said, has thrown nearly the whole people, as a stranger might suppose, into a state of *salivation* ; and which makes one desire that the inscription which Madame Calderon found on a tablet in one of the churches in Mexico, might be put up in every church, court-room, school-room, and hall in these United States : “ For the love of God, all good Christians are requested not to spit in this place.” But that I may not

seem to be travelling out of my own professional province as a moral lecturer, in animadverting upon the use of Tobacco, I will quote the words of a celebrated physician, Dr. Woodward, of Worcester,* from his last Report of the State Lunatic Hospital. Dr. Woodward says, "Tobacco is a powerful narcotic agent, and its use is very deleterious to the nervous system, producing tremors, vertigo, faintness, palpitation of the heart, and other serious diseases. That tobacco certainly produces insanity, I am not able positively to observe ; but that it produces a predisposition to it, I am fully confident. Its influence upon the brain, and nervous system generally, is hardly less obvious than that of alcohol, and if used excessively is equally injurious. The young are particularly susceptible to the influence of these narcotics. If a young man becomes intemperate before he is twenty years of age, he rarely lives to thirty. If a young man uses tobacco while the sys-

* In the lecture, when delivered, an extract was made from another work on the subject ; but from unavoidable reasons, arising from the copyright of the book in which it was contained, it could not be printed with the lecture, and another extract is introduced in its place.

tem is greatly susceptible to its influence, he will not be likely to escape injurious effects that will be developed sooner or later, and both diminish the enjoyments of life and shorten its period.

“The very general use of tobacco among young men at the present day is alarming, and shows the ignorance and devotion of the devotees of this dangerous practice to one of the most virulent poisons of the vegetable world. The testimony of medical men, of the most respectable character, could be quoted, to any extent, to sustain these views of the deleterious influence of this dangerous narcotic.

“Dr. Rush says of tobacco, ‘It impairs appetite, produces dyspepsia, tremors, vertigo, headache, and epilepsy. It injures the voice, destroys the teeth, and imparts to the complexion a disagreeable dusky brown.’

“Dr. Boerhaave says that ‘since the use of tobacco has been so general in Europe, the number of hypochondriacal and consumptive complaints has increased by its use.’

“Dr. Cullen says, ‘I have known a small quantity, snuffed up the nose, to produce giddiness, stupor, and vomiting. There are

many instances of its more violent effects, even of its proving a mortal poison.'

"Dr. Darwin says, 'It produces diseases of the salivary glands and the pancreas, and injures the power of digestion by occasioning the person to spit off the saliva which he ought to swallow.'

"Dr. Tissot once saw the smoking of it prove fatal.

"Dr. Pilcher details the particulars of a case of a medical student whom he had been requested to see. 'This gentleman suffered under all the symptoms of phthisis. There was muco-purulent expectoration, night sweats, &c. The mucous membrane of the throat, epiglottis, and the neighboring parts, were coated with a brown fur. The patient had been an immoderate snuff-taker; he was told to discontinue the snuff; he did so and recovered.'

"Dr. Chapman says, 'By a member of Congress from the west, in the meridian of life, and of a very stout frame, I was some time since consulted; he told me that, from having been one of the most healthy and fearless of men, he had become "sick all over, and timid as a girl."' He could not

even present a petition to Congress, much less say a word concerning it, though he had long been a practising lawyer, and served much in legislative bodies. By any ordinary noise he was startled or thrown into tremulousness, and afraid to be alone at night. His appetite and digestion were gone, he had painful sensations at the pit of his stomach, and unrelenting constipated bowels. During the narrative of his suffering, his aspect approached the haggard wildness of mental distemperature. On inquiry, I found that his consumption of tobacco was almost incredible, by chewing, snuffing, and smoking. Being satisfied that all his misery arose from this poisonous weed, its use was discontinued, and in a few weeks he entirely recovered.'

"Distressing as was this case, I have seen others, from the same cause, even more deplorable. Two young men were in succession brought to me for advice, whom I found in a state of insanity, very much resembling delirium tremens. Each had chewed and smoked tobacco, to excess, though perfectly temperate as regarded drink. The further account given me was, 'that in early life,

adopting this bad practice, it grew with their growth. Dyspepsia soon occurred, attended by great derangement of the nervous system, and ultimately the mania I have mentioned. But I have also seen the same condition very speedily induced.'

"Dr. Franklin says he never used it, and never met with a man, who did use it, that advised him to follow his example.

"The venerable John Quincy Adams, in a recent letter on the subject, says, that in early life he used tobacco, but for more than thirty years he had discontinued the practice. 'I have often wished,' says he, 'that every individual of the human race, affected with this artificial passion, would prevail upon himself to try, but for three months, the experiment which I have made, and am sure it would turn every acre of tobacco land into a wheat field, and add *five years* to the average of human life.'

"In our experience in the Hospital, tobacco, in all its forms, is injurious to the insane. It increases excitement of the nervous system in many cases, deranges the stomach, and produces vertigo, tremors, and stupor in others. It is difficult to control its use, with

the insane, and though considerable suffering comes from its entire abandonment, it cannot be generally allowed with safety.

“It is very natural to suppose, that an article possessing the active properties of this fascinating narcotic, should produce most deleterious effects upon health — particularly upon the brain and nervous system.

“The uninitiated cannot smoke a cigar, or use tobacco in any form, without unpleasant effects. How, then, can it be possible, that a poison so active can be used with impunity? The stomach and brain, subjected to such influences, will become diseased, and show their effects, as certainly as if alcohol were used. If asked my medical opinion, which was safest, four glasses of wine, or four quids of tobacco, daily, I should unhesitatingly say the *wine*. Of the two evils, this would, in my opinion, be the least. Tobacco is the strongest, most dangerous narcotic; the habit of its use is the strongest and most difficult to overcome, and the influence felt from it the most baneful and destructive to health.”

Dr. Woodward also remarks, “I have supposed it (tobacco) was the most ready and

common stepping-stone to that use of spirituous liquor which leads to intemperance."

Dr. J. Cheyne says, "Tobacco is an enemy to domestic economy and personal cleanliness; it taints the breath permanently, injures digestion, impairs the intellect, and even shortens the life of some of its votaries." — "The chief evil, however, in tobacco, taken in any way, is, that it leads myriads upon myriads to the habitual use of ardent spirits, and opium, and consequently to the ruin of soul, body, and estate."

Dr. Justus Liebig, the celebrated German chemist, says, that "smoking cigars is prejudicial to health, as much gaseous carbon is injuriously inhaled, that robs the system of its oxygen."

Professor Shipman says, "As a general rule, those who use tobacco to excess are much troubled with wakefulness; and when they do sleep, it is not 'tired nature's sweet restorer,' but a succession of broken slumbers, interrupted by startings and disagreeable dreams. Excessive smoking has been known to produce a state of the system in all respects similar to delirium tremens. Most of the narcotics, I believe, when habitually

indulged in, render the sleep broken, and disturbed with dreams of frightful imagery." — "The habitual use of any narcotic is liable to produce derangement of the digestive organs, and through that a long train of nervous derangements, which baffle the skill and tire the patience of the physician. The digestion once impaired, the great nervous or ganglionic system takes on a chain of sympathies, which are often at a distance from the first organ affected."

I would suggest, however, that I do not consider the evil in question as merely a physical one ; else I should not introduce it in a course of Moral Lectures. I believe it is, in not a few cases, a matter of character and morals, involving not only health, but virtue. I think facts will bear me out in the assertion, that this habit has inflamed the appetite for strong drink, and paved the way for idleness and dissipation.

Similar and additional most important views to these now quoted, have been given in a public lecture by our own distinguished townsman, in the same profession ; and they merit the serious attention of every

one addicted to the habits in question, or about forming them.*

Again : the young are tempted to be Extravagant. This is the tendency of the times ; extravagance in dress, in living, in amusements, and luxuries. The ancient frugality has departed from New England. This generation dress in silks and broadcloths. They spend the wages of a week in the pleasures of an hour. This tendency is not confined to any one class or condition, but pervades all. The poorest lad will lay out his small change for trifling toys, rather than husband it as the germ of means wherewith to enter business and secure a competence. Of course, the only good of money is in its uses ; and the question to decide is, what are its legitimate uses ? What is recommended is not of course meanness, or parsimony, or avarice. There is a medium between a tight fist and a hand so wide that it can hold nothing. I am not dissuading from generosity, and charity, and ample and

* Appendix, B.— Through the kindness of Dr. Twitchell and Judge Parker, the passages referred to in the Lectures are introduced in the Appendix.

comfortable provision for all the wants of life, and such an outlay for proper recreations as shall conduce to the happiness of ourselves and associates. My admonition is against extravagance ; against living beyond one's means, and wasting money in the purchase of what is needless and perhaps hurtful. Some things are fitted to cultivate the taste, and foster the love of the beautiful and the elegant, and they are by no means to be neglected or despised ; for he who made us what we are, gave us an eye to see the fair and graceful, and an ear for melodious sounds. But the young man needs to be continually on his guard lest his luxuries should swallow up his charities, and his extravagance kill his business ; for at his age and with his feelings, he is prone to lavish his purse upon whatever first catches his eye and pleases his imagination. The profuse expeditures of one provoke the envy and jealousy of others, and excite a ruinous emulation. Mr. A must have as fine a coat, and ride in as good style, as Mr. B ; and Mr. C must have as expensive a house, and live as well, as Mr. D.

We may state a few rules on this subject, on which all will probably agree, and which

would materially aid us in a right practice in this important department of duty.

1. We have no right to spend other people's money, directly or indirectly, for our pleasures.

2. We have no right to expend on useless articles what is needed for the comfort of our parents, or for the purposes of education, and a competence for our families and ourselves.

3. We have no right to impoverish ourselves by luxuries, so as to be unable to minister to the wants of the poor and afflicted, and help support the high and holy institutions of human society.

4. We have no right to run into debt for articles when we have no means in prospect to pay for them.

5. Although it has been called the philosopher's stone to "pay as we go," we have no right to spend as we go; for it is entailing the burden of our support upon friends or upon society, in future days, when sickness or the disabilities of old age will overtake us.

6. We have no right to indulge in extravagance merely for its own sake, in order to outdo others in our style of dress or living,

and therefore to rouse their envy and a ruinous competition, when it adds nothing to our comfort, taste, or improvement.

There is a religion of the pocket, as well as of the church ; a religion of the parlor and the toilet, as well as of the closet ; and that heavenly mistress of our lives forbids our using one of the most powerful of the gifts of Providence, and the results of our industry, for the outgoes of a reckless and profuse extravagance. She points us to the hour, when the remembrance of having given only a cup of cold water to a fellow-mortal in need will awaken more true pleasure than that of having lavished thousands upon “the pomp and circumstance” of life.

For the support of extravagance, and for the indulgence of ambition, another giant temptation — the Love of Money — crosses the path of youth. I do not say money, for that is not evil in itself ; but the love, the inordinate love of it, which the apostle pronounces the root of all evil. I do not say enterprise, and industry, and competence — all laudable and desirable — but I say the love of money, unchecked and unregulated ; money however made, money at all hazards ; money

by fair means, if possible, but money at all events. This gangrene is working deeply in the national flesh. It has already branded as sordid the American character. It has aroused the old world against the new for swindling on a public scale, and the repudiation of state debts. It has extensively corrupted the great fountains of national and individual good faith, and made us a by-word and a hissing, far and wide.

Never, perhaps, since Adam was driven out from Eden, have finer opportunities been given to the great mass of men to earn an honorable livelihood, and to lay up a reasonable competence for sickness, accident, or old age, than in this country. He that is poor is so, in many cases, though not in all, from idleness, intemperance, poor calculation, and extravagance. But, with all these boundless resources before us, we are so liable to become engrossed in mere money-making, as to forget that that is not the great end of life itself, but only the means to an end far higher and nobler. The warning was given of old, and it should reverberate nowhere more loudly than through our busy cities, and along our industrious

rivers, and among our toiling workshops, "He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent." We may gain the world and lose ourselves. We may neglect the culture of mind and heart, and, with thousands in bank stock, we may yet be bankrupt in character. These are all very trite and common-place remarks; and I am afraid, my young friends, you will not pay so much attention to them as they deserve; but they are nevertheless true and important, and most intimately concern your welfare. For you know the grand master-passion of this nation, and how truly Mammon is the god of this world. You will agree with me, that if there ever was an age or a people where the apostolic exhortations needed to be poured into the ear, and rung through the heart, peal on peal, it is here and now. "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou," O young man, "flee

these things ; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness."

Some young men are in danger of ruin from idleness and thriftlessness. They mispend their time in the shops, and cellars, and bar-rooms, and are fast educating themselves, in the street school, for a miserable, shiftless, and dissipated manhood and old age ; but another and larger class, with many most honorable and laudable plans and motives, are in danger of the other temptation now under consideration. So hard is life, so difficult is the golden mean ! Even enterprise may run into speculation, and thrift may degenerate into meanness, and the love of money may conquer the love of right. It is needful to repeat, and reiterate, therefore, the truism, that no gain, however great, can compensate for one iota of dishonesty ; and that to barter one's self-respect, and sweet consciousness of an upright soul, is a very poor bargain, though we may be able to enter, by credit on the other side of the book, thousands and tens of thousands of dollars. And when we consider how many mischiefs flow from this engrossing passion — the absorption of the whole heart in the

things that perish — the prostitution of the soul in sordid schemes — the sacrifice of honesty — and the violation of truth — the mean tricks and artifices to which men will stoop — the pursuit of some callings which strike a death-blow at the good order and happiness of the community — the investment of capital in questionable modes — the pride and luxury engendered — the envy and jealousy of the less fortunate — the hot and angry competitions — the rank overgrowth of cares and perplexities — we wonder not that so many wreck health, respectability, and virtue, in the tremendous game. It is this passion that sows discord in families, and sets friend against friend. It is this, in no slight degree, that unleashes the bull-dogs of war, and embroils the peace of nations. It is this that builds the slave-ship, and the distillery, and opens the brothel and the dram-shop. It is the love of money that bows the soul from its manly independence to cringe for office, and to truckle for favor with the minions of power. It is anti-republican, and wars against the purity of our free institutions. It is this intense eagerness, too, for gain, that is still ready, as of old, if

not to sell the Lord of life and glory for thirty pieces of silver, yet to barter the immortal principles of truth and humanity, for which he died on the cross, for the sake of "filthy lucre."

To the young men of this educated and Christian community I would say, then, "Beware of making Mammon your god; never desire, like Midas, that all you touch may turn to gold; there are better things even than money; there is such a thing as a *poor* rich man; and, thank Heaven, such a thing, too, as a *rich* poor man. Be content with steady and moderate profits, with honest gains, and aspire not for sudden riches. Terrible, though smooth and insidious, are the temptations, which beset you in the business transactions of life; and it will require all the firmness of steel to resist the adversary. If you would shun, not barely fraud, and forgery, and theft; but if you would be that "noblest work of God, 'an honest man;'" if you would steer clear of the rocks of speculation on which a thousand richly-laden ships have foundered; if you would resist the tendency to overtrade and overwork, and to carry more sail than bal-

last ; if you would be strictly just in all your dealings, strictly true to all your promises, and “owe no man any thing, but to love one another,” every muscle and sinew of your moral constitution will be put to the test. It will be no child’s play, but a task for heroes. You will need all good motives, and all possible self-vigilance ; you will want all good angels to help you walk without stumbling or turning aside in the strait and narrow path of honesty and righteousness. But of him who says there is no such peril, and casts himself into the turmoil of the world without care or resolution, I should fear, if not the open ruin of the swindler, at least the gradual undermining of those great and noble elements of a young man’s character, for which all the gold in the universe would furnish not the least compensation. “And what I say unto you, I say unto all, of every age, Watch, lest ye enter into this temptation.”

I have thus spoken of some of the perils which are about the path of the young man. I might speak longer of them. I have given specimens, rather than the sum total. And I would further say, that our tempta-

tions do not come upon us labelled and heralded, so that we can recognize them at once. If they did, easy would be the work of self-control. But they approach in disguise. They steal upon us unawares. They insinuate themselves, little by little, into our too easy confidence. We shall, therefore, need all our sagacity and fortitude to detect in the seeming friend the mortal enemy. To sleep, therefore, is destruction. To remit the eternal watch is to invite attack. Do not suppose, again, that the mere impulses of youth, good and generous though they be, can carry you safely through the dangers of your condition. Only firm and well-established principles can present an impenetrable shield against corruption. There must be a self-sustained principle within, and a strength from above to ward off all "the fiery darts;" for "whoso despiseth little things even, shall fall little by little." It is only by "taking heed" to his conduct, according "to the word of God, that the young man can cleanse his way."

In conclusion : "There is no moral object," says one of our distinguished American fe-

male writers,* “so beautiful to me as a conscientious young man. I watch him as I do a star in the heavens. Clouds may be before him, but we know that his light is behind them, and will beam again. The blaze of others’ popularity may outshine him, but we know that, though unseen, he illuminates his own sphere. He resists temptation, not without a struggle, for that is not virtue ; but he does resist and conquer. He hears the sarcasm of the profligate, and it stings him, for that is the trial of virtue ; but heals the wound with his own pure touch. He heeds not the watchword of fashion, if it lead to sin. The atheist, who says, not only with his heart but with his lips, there is no God, controls him not ; he sees the hand of creating God, and rejoices in it. Woman is sheltered by fond arms and loving counsels ; old age is protected by its experience, and manhood by its strength ; but the young man stands, amid the temptations of the world, like a self-balanced tower. Happy is he who seeks and gains the prop and shelter of morality ! Onward, then, conscientious youth ! Raise thy

* Mrs. Gilman.

standard, and nerve thyself for goodness. If God have given thee intellectual power, awaken it in that cause. Never let it be said of thee, 'He helped to swell the tide of sin by pouring his influence into its channels.' If thou art feeble in mental strength, throw not that drop into a polluted current. Awake, arise, young man ; assume the beautiful garb of virtue. It is fearfully easy to sin ; it is difficult to be pure and holy. Put on thy strength, then. Let Truth be the lady of thy love ; defend her."

LECTURE III.

THE MORAL DUTIES OF YOUNG MEN.

YOUR attention has been directed, in the two previous Lectures, to some of the most prominent Moral Dangers to which young men are exposed in our community. Let us now turn from the negative side to the positive, and from what ought not to what ought to be done. The field of the Moral Duties of the young is vast in extent ; and requires volumes, not lectures, to exhaust it. The most that can be done, is, to touch here and there upon some of the essential points, and trust the rest to common sense and an enlightened sentiment of moral obligation.

It was the direction of a wise and great man of old, "Let no man despise thy youth." It is a maxim of profound truth. But we may add, without presumption, "Do not despise it thyself." I am not entering

here a plea in favor of pride or arrogance, of lofty looks or disdainful behavior. It is no part of true Self-respect to think more highly of ourselves, or more meanly of others, than we ought to think. By self-respect, I do not mean that inflammable jealousy, that is ready to take fire on every occasion, as if slighted or insulted, by not being put forward into "the uppermost rooms and the chief seats ;" nor is a manly self-respect to be confounded with that sensitive feeling of honor, so called, which snaps asunder the closest bands of friendship, and hesitates not to wash out a fictitious stain with a brother's blood. It is a poor sense of personal dignity, too, that has no deeper basis than one's ancestry, or family, fortune, or calling in life.

"Honor and shame from no condition rise ;
Act well your part ; there all the honor lies."

"I am a man," is better ground for respecting one's self than to be king or president. The human in us is infinitely superior to the conventional. I am a man, should be the feeling of every one ; and therefore I ought to be and do all that becomes a man ; to fill that noble circle of duty and character to the

outermost rim, and to cast away all that is unmanly in sentiment and conduct. Thus defined and illustrated, self-respect is the key-stone in the arch of a true manhood. It binds all the virtues together. Without it, virtue itself is but a name. And he, who would not be despised and despicable in his youth, must respect himself. He must reverence that nature which God has given him, and which is created in the divine likeness. He must think with awe of his mysterious being and existence, and bow with wonder in view of that eternal destiny which is before him. Such a self-respect is as far removed from a swollen pride and paltry self-esteem, as it is from meanness and abjectness of spirit. It implies a knowledge of what is due to God and our fellow-creatures, as much as to ourselves.

There is complaint that the young sometimes ape the bearing of manhood before they have reached its age and dignity; that sons have their own way with their fathers, and daughters with their mothers; that apprentices manage their masters, and scholars govern their teachers. This tendency is not imaginary. It doubtless springs partly from

the very spirit of our institutions. Self-government, self-will, a sensitive impatience of all restraint, a mouth too tender to bear the bit, are the overgrowth of our teeming soil of freedom. So with all blessings must be matched their drawback, so with all evils are mingled some blessed drops of alleviation. But, to revert to the topic in hand, this precocity in youth is no true self-respect. It is no manly dignity of spirit, that prompts a young person to transcend his sphere. To flout at just authority, is not manliness, but meanness. He who attempts to embroil a school, or harass a public meeting, may seem to himself, and his befooled companions, as doing something very smart ; but, in the eyes of better judges, he is still the animal with long ears, though he may have put on the skin of the lion. He who justly respects himself, will regard the rights and feelings of others ; but he who has no reverence for his own more than kingly nature and sublime destiny, and feels no grand stirrings of hope and immortality, will trample on others as readily as he does on himself. If we have the right idea in this matter, we shall not respect ourselves so much for those things in

which we differ from other men, — as the house we live in, the garments we wear, our property, or standing in society, — as for those powers and qualities in which we may be rivalled by the poorest and most obscure members of society. “Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?” A young man cannot learn too early, that the easy swagger, the flippant speech, the ready oath, the cigar puffed in the face of the town, the glass tossed off among admiring associates, are no marks of real dignity, but that they lower him in the respect of others as much as they do in fact in his own. Let there be independence and manliness; but, for the honor of human nature and the divine handiwork, do not suppose they consist in the elegant dress, or watches, or rings; in supercilious haughtiness, or vulgar coarseness of manners. Let the young man respect himself; but do not let him run into the mistake that, to do that, he must despise others. He must learn to discriminate between the genuine and the counterfeit article; for they are both abroad in society.

I have called your attention to this point, because there is scarcely a more important

one in the whole range of our subject. It is often the pivot on which the whole character turns. He who understands himself in this respect, is prepared to act his part well in life. He will be saved from a swarm of follies and vices, and rise, in all that is noble and ingenuous, to the stature of a sterling manhood. The thousand petty meannesses and littlenesses, the lies and tricks, the artifices and compliances, which drag down the character into the dust, and soil its beautiful whiteness, our young hero will shake off, as the king of beasts the dewdrops of the morning from his royal mane.

In the gifts of reason, conscience, affection, and aspiration ; in the boundless capacity of improvement ; in the great trust of influence ; in the present condition and the future destiny of man ; in all the sublime possibilities of power, and usefulness, and bliss, that hover over our being, — there are abundant claims upon us, to “honor,” as the Bible commands, “all men,” and it would be the dictate of selfishness, that we should do no less unto ourselves. If there be manliness and high-toned character, it is with those who have too much self-respect to stoop to

do an unworthy act, and will therefore neither grovel in the sty of sensuality, nor crouch to the fashions that debauch the morals, nor yield to the ridicule of companions that would entice them to sin. Respect yourselves, and you will be respectable and honored, favored of God and man.

There is one violation of this self-respect so gross and prominent, prevailing not only in this place but in most of our villages, as to deserve to be singled out and held up to notice. It was, in fact, one chief motive in the invitation on your part and the acceptance on mine of the request to deliver this course of Lectures. In the language of your letter addressed to me, "We, who number ourselves with the young men of our village, are apprized by facts witnessed as well as by frequent reference to them in our public meetings, that there is a looseness of principle among too many of our young men and 'boys,' that leads to disorderly conduct ; that there is a laxity of restraint which, if not seasonably checked, will lead to crime and outrage, disgraceful to the character of our village. We believe the foundation of this evil may be traced to a failure, in many cases,

on the part of masters, parents, and guardians, in impressing upon their apprentices, children, and wards, lessons of duty; and that many are led to spend their precious hours, not devoted to business, in a manner ill calculated to improve their minds and fit them to be useful and respected members of society."

In speaking, then, of the Unbecoming Behavior of the young, you perceive that I am bringing no accusation, which you yourselves have not already framed and indorsed. Indeed, it is too evident to have escaped any one's observation, that a fearful amount of insubordination has been allowed to grow up in our midst, and that, justly or unjustly, we have acquired no enviable reputation. I am not going to say that we are worse in this respect than our neighbors, or better, — comparisons are odious; but every one who has a regard for the good order of society or the prospects of the young, must have been often pained by their conduct. I would not institute any parallel between the former times and these, in this particular; there were naughty boys and reckless young men even among the Puritans, if we may credit

their faithful chronicler, Winthrop. But it is too plain to require apology or demonstration in stating it, that the list of juvenile offenders is fearfully large and increasing in our community. Notwithstanding the institution of Sabbath schools, and the improvement of our common schools, and Lyceums, lectures, juvenile literature, and many powerful influences brought to bear on the young mind and heart, we still have to record many deplorable lapses from good morals. And lectures to young men, which should pass this topic by, would be glaringly deficient; for in your hands, in a considerable measure, lies the remedy. Parents, masters, and guardians have, indeed, a most important part to act in this matter; and it becomes them carefully to consider whether they have used their lawful and unquestionable authority with sufficient fidelity and efficiency to abate evils, which they are as free to acknowledge as the rest of the public. In a charge delivered to the Grand Jury of this county by the Chief Justice, not many months since, it was urgently and eloquently argued, that the increasing crime of our country was attributable, in a great degree, to the laxity of pa-

rental government.* There was not obedience at home, and therefore there was not obedience in the state. It were desirable that that charge should be printed and put into the hands of every parent, guardian, and master among us. It was a sermon from the right place, and free from any imputation of priestcraft ; a lecture, coming not from the retired student, but from a large and just observation in society ; from the very theatre where the secrets of crime are ferreted out, and the causes laid open by trustworthy evidence and searching investigation. If such an appeal cannot open the eyes of society, and rouse men to action to apply the means of reformation, nothing that your lecturer can say will produce the least effect. It will be only words, words, words in your ears ; forgotten as soon as spoken ; mere writing upon the water ; a momentary ripple, returning at once to its usual cold and glassy smoothness.

I have very little faith in scolding, as a means to rectify any evil. At the fireside I never knew it to work any great good. In public it is ridiculous ; and receives, as it

* Appendix, C.

merits, no toleration. And in the case under consideration it would probably be as inefficacious and foolish as it is every where else. Merely to talk and play the termagant will not probably increase the energy of household government, nor check the disorders of youthful delinquents. When all is said and done, too, much is to be pardoned to the natural vivacity of youth ; so quick, so fearless, and thoughtless. We were all children once, and we remember what it was to have the blood dance through the veins, and the spirit delirious with joy. We cannot expect that these impulsive natures will to a punctilio square to our grave rules, that these nimble feet will tread precisely in the steps of their seniors. Room and latitude must be given for some curvetings and gambols, for innocent recreations and harmless sports, if we would not mould our youth to a cast-iron stupor of face and stolidity of soul. In speaking, therefore, upon this subject, we would do it with all kindness and consideration ; with all suitable regard for the weaknesses and temptations of early years, and without one drop of bitterness towards a single individual.

But even the patience of Job, long suffering as it was, found a limit at last ; and I think ours must be nearly exhausted. When, after line upon line and precept upon precept the evil of insubordination rages as before ; when the meetings for religious worship are at times disturbed by shouts and yells more resembling the Indian war-whoop than any sounds heard in a civilized country ; when the concert and the lecture-room are beset with loud noises without, “making night hideous,” and uninterrupted, annoying, and ill-bred whispering within ; when the sidewalks are impassable for indecency and profaneness, and the entrances to public meetings are blocked up by the unmannerly and boisterous, it must not be thought strange if a little honest indignation be felt and expressed. For we shall begin to think that these improprieties are not all to be put down to the score of the levity of youth, but to a settled obstinacy and malice on the part of some, who thus disgrace themselves, their friends, and the town. And it must not be thought strange, or severe, but rather an act of benevolence to arrest this headlong contempt of public order, if those whose

rights are trod upon, and whose feelings are outraged, and whose property is injured, and even whose domestic animals are cruelly mutilated, shall, other means failing, resort to that redress and protection which is given them by the laws of their country. There **MUST BE** order and subordination; and if it cannot be effected by gentle measures, it must be by cogent ones. If advice, and parental instruction, and school discipline are insufficient, then there must be the officer, the court, and the prison. Better that one or five be brought to punishment, than that the whole generation throw off the restraint of wholesome laws and decent manners, and grow up a wild, turbulent mobocracy, neither "fearing God nor regarding man." *

The youth are not all, of course, charge-

* It was thought best to retain these remarks, which have a local significance, for the evils of insubordination are much the same in one village or city as in another. It is an epidemical, perhaps contagious, disease, and is thought by some good judges to be increasing. The cure evidently lies in a more abundant application of moral and religious influence to the juvenile character, and in the joint vigilance and coöperation of all classes, parents, teachers, guardians, and all members of society, to see that there is not only *law*, but *order*.

able with these disgraceful proceedings ; a few are sufficient to do a wide-spread mischief ; but, if there is not greater strictness of manners enforced, the infection of evil example will be diffused far and near, and contaminate many who are now innocent. The younger will catch it from the older, and improve upon the vulgarity they copy from, until the leaven of disorder will insinuate itself so widely and subtly as to poison the manners and morals of a whole community. It is wiser to nip the evil in the bud ; to crush the egg before it hatches dragons, and “gorgons and chimeras dire.”

Independently of the influence of your elders, it is in your power, my young friends, in no slight measure, if you will take hold of the matter in earnest, to effect a thorough reformation. Let the public opinion of the young persons of this audience be set as a flint against this mean and dishonorable behavior. Let it find no favor in their eyes. Let them respect themselves too much to give countenance to such unmanliness. Let it not be encouraged by their smiles ; as if a very smart and witty thing were done, when it is only a very foolish and wicked one.

Let them not tolerate it with a silent and unremonstrating sufferance, but speak out the fearless rebuke, the honest indignation. Let every one do it. Let none stand aloof in cynical scorn or misanthropic indifference. Let these ill-taught manners find no quarter in any portion of youth or age. Let the female voice utter its decided negative. Let public opinion be our police, and every citizen be an officer, to see that the tranquillity of society be not abandoned to the reckless and the rebellious.

It may be said that it is no very great immorality after all, and that such censure is only getting up a tempest in a teapot, and that the evil will correct itself. It is a poor maxim that any evil will cure itself, much less this one. Its tendency is to grow and spread unless it be curbed. It may be said to be only a youthful indiscretion, and that no harm is meant. But manners *are* morals. You cannot insinuate a distinction between actions and character. If there is bad conduct, there must be bad or ignorant motive ; if wrong doing, then wrong thinking and feeling. The outrages in question may be idle and heedless ; but that does not render

them innocent ; for we are not at liberty to be idle and heedless in matters affecting the rights and feelings of our fellow-men. If we wished to train up a regular mob, ready at a moment to assault our persons and fire our dwellings, we could not take more effectual measures to do it than to suffer the young to behave as they please on public occasions ; to treat our citizens and strangers with scorn ; to show contempt to the aged ; to rebel against just restraints and wholesome authority. “ For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry ? ” If we sow the wind, we must not complain if we reap the whirlwind.

I invoke, therefore, the judicious influence of the order-loving and well-disposed young men of our community to stay, both by example and precept, an evil which is increasing in magnitude, which is vexing for the time, and which is prolific of evils to come. I call for the aid of presiding officers at all public meetings, to maintain perfect order, and to make that an absolute *sine qua non* to the procedure and discharge of business. I appeal to the heads of families, and all masters and guardians, that they suffer

not those under their care, and for whose good conduct they have as it were entered into bonds with society, to be guilty of "confusion, and of every evil work." * It behoves teachers to keep the reins of a strict control over their schools. Let the ministers of the gospel of peace, the magistrates of our towns, the judges and juries of our courts, coöperate in their several spheres, and by their various means, to eradicate an evil, which strikes a death-blow at the very purposes for which society is organized, — public order ; and the protection of the rights and privileges of each by the concentrated power of all.

In connection with this subject, a few words will be borne with on Manners in general. We do not expect or desire that our youth should be familiar with all the rules of Lord Chesterfield ; but we have a right to ask that, brought up as they are in a civilized and Christian land, they should at least be free from gross and disgusting vulgarities of speech and behavior. There is an intimate union between manners and character, and where one is degraded, the other

* Appendix, D.

will be likely to be equally low. We have the substantials of great happiness and a beautiful civilization among us, but the unpalatable truth must be spoken — we are rather boorish and bearish as a people and nation. We do not “rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man.” We do not cherish kindness of feeling and politeness of manners. I regret to see our schools often so rude and boisterous. “Yes, sir,” and “No, sir,” have been abbreviated into a coarse, gruff “yes,” and “no.” Children are no longer taught to “make their manners,” as the expressive phrase is, on entering and leaving a room. When you speak to a youth, the chances are, you will receive an abrupt, careless reply, which argues any thing but good breeding, and makes you regret that you said any thing. The North American Indians surpassed their successors on the same soil for courtesy of manners, and their council-fires never looked upon scenes like those enacted in the capitol of this civilized nation, where we profess to send, and probably do, our *representative* men. When we see the rudeness and cruel disregard of the feelings and rights of others among the

youth of our land ; when we consider the tortures, only less than those inflicted by the Inquisition, which our school-teachers are often compelled to endure ; when we witness the impudence and brass of young persons, who have good opportunities to know what is decent and proper, — I feel that hardly any saying is more needed among us than that of the apostle, “ Be courteous, be courteous.” It is no part of true manliness to be impolite, and abusive, and scornful in one’s conduct. It gains no esteem from others, and no approbation from our own hearts in their better moments. A great deal must be done to correct our morals, and quite as much, perhaps, to rectify our manners. I am not arguing for the niceties of fashionable etiquette, or the graces of court-circles ; but we republicans and freemen ought not to be ashamed to be very well behaved. There is a Christian politeness, that smooths with a respectful and gentle demeanor the rough collisions of life, and, while it treats seniors and superiors with reverence, and equals with dignity, does not forget that we owe to the poorest and humblest, to the beggar or the colored person, civility and courtesy.

It has been said by naturalists, that in the acorn is contained the whole future oak in a miniature form ; trunk, and branch, and root, all coiled up in invisible minuteness, in the germ, and ready at the favorable moment to unfold in massive size and strength, striking its roots into the heart of the earth, and lifting up its head to the heavens. So the youth of to-day are the next generation in germ and bud. Whatever is popular and current among them, — the habits, manners, principles, now in exercise, — will stand out in bold relief hereafter, and constitute the grand characteristics of society. Let your behavior and manners, now, be such that you would not be unwilling to have them magnified a hundred times, and extended over new generations, and sent down through coming ages. Act not only for yourselves, but for your country and mankind.

Viewed even in the humblest light, good manners are a species of passport to the acquaintance of the world ; a letter of recommendation and introduction to desirable society, which cannot be lost in fire or flood. There are many eligible situations in life for which young persons utterly disqualify

themselves, when they grow up disrespectful and unmannerly. And then, when we consider how important the bearing of these things is upon the character, and how they make or mar a true manhood, we cannot be so devoid of sense and soul, as to neglect what is so indissolubly connected with our own happiness and that of others. Do not say these are little things, and that it is no matter what the rivulets are, if the river is pure ; for it is the rivulets that make the river. Life is composed of little things, and a wise man will not despise a single one. The million fibres do not more certainly go to form the fabric of the garment, or the inconceivable multitude of the sunbeams, direct, reflected, and refracted, to constitute the glorious noon-tide, than all the little particulars, the events, the affairs, the news, the weather, the business, the behavior, the words, the health, the dress, the food, the associates, the house, the work, the book, the plan, the prospects, to swell the grand total of our happiness or our misery. Into this problem of life, the gentleness or rudeness of our speech, the civility or coldness of our manners, the scorn or respect of our bearing, the

kind consideration or the hard-hearted recklessness of our treatment of others, enter as most important elements. I rejoice to believe that there is no inconsiderable portion of our young men, who know what belongs to the character of a Christian gentleman, and who will copy it into their own; and who will exert their influence to promote decorum of behavior wherever they move in society. Let their number daily increase.

I proceed to one more topic of grave significance to the welfare of a young man. The importance of having an Aim in Life is beyond calculation. Many live aimlessly. They proceed as a carpenter would do, who should collect the materials for a house, and work upon them at hap-hazard, cutting a mortise here and a tenon there, without planning how part should fit part, and beam beam, and "the whole building, fitly framed together, should grow unto a holy temple;" or as an engineer, who should lay out a railroad by piecemeal, a part in one town and a part in another, without calculating how the gradients would agree together and the lines meet. If there is any one sweeping accusation that will hold good against almost

all men, it is that they live an aimless, from-hand-to-mouth life. They live by pieces, not by wholes. They do not take aim, and aim high, and therefore they miss the golden mark. They shoot at a venture, and only waste powder and ball. They may hit every thing, but they hurt nothing. And if there is any piece of advice, in regard to life in general, pithy and pungent, and contained in a few words, it is, Have an aim, have a high aim, and keep to it.

The beasts of the field cannot look forward a day. But to man has been given the wondrous capacities of hope, of anticipation, of inference of effects from causes ; and these spiritual eyes, that look into futurity, were bestowed not for idle speculation, but that we might sketch out a plan of life, sail by a chart, and, though liable to be driven far out of our course by adverse winds and waves, yet still, keeping our destination fully in view, and forever steering towards it, we may hope at last to reach the haven. Every man should have an aim in his business, and know what he is going to do, why he is going to do it, and how he is going to do it. He should know what effects he wishes to

produce, and study to set in operation those causes which will produce them. We talk about fortune and misfortune ; but, as a general rule, fortune is foresight, and misfortune is miscalculation. Every man is a debtor to his occupation, to make it as good and honorable, and efficient and useful, as he possibly can. “ In all labor there is profit.” In every calling among men, there is room for the pursuit of the true, the beautiful, and the useful, which, though not religion itself, lie in its immediate neighborhood. Every one should have something to do in this working world, and that something he should endeavor to do in the very best style. It is an injury to one’s character to do any thing poorly. He that slights his business will be likely to slight his principles. While to aim at perfection in making a piece of furniture, or an article of clothing, tends to uplift the whole character. We are too prone to neglect these seeming minutiae of our daily routine, and not weigh the untold influence upon us of the countless incidents of our business and labor.

“ Depend upon it,” says Judge Smith, in a letter to a young man, “ that vulgar thing

called labor, pains, care, diligence, gives better security for success in the world — indeed, for the acquisition of every thing good — than ability and learning. — *You should have praiseworthy objects always before your eyes, and diligently pursue them*; you must never be weary in well-doing, but at the same time you must moderate your expectations, and remember that a sanguine temper of mind is likely to end in mortification and disappointment, and so discourage exertions. No good thing is obtained without time. The best things are of the slowest growth. This is the order of nature, and you can hardly expect nature will change for your special accommodation. I have known persons not wanting in judgment, but who are constant in nothing but changes — ever adopting new courses of business — trying them for a short space, but not giving them a fair trial, and then abandoning them for some new project. This is a very great as well as a very common error, and accounts for many of the failures in life I have witnessed. Be slow in adopting your plans, carefully observe their working, and persevere in them till your judgment is clearly

convinced. I have seen a laborious and painful life wasted, all for the want of a little more 'patient continuance in well-doing.'"

Coming from an octogenarian, an acute observer of the world, and prompted by a deep interest in the young, these remarks ought to be pondered by every young person. The best success in life, indeed, depends upon ourselves; not upon fortune, or circumstances, or friends. The fixed aim, the unflinching purpose, the steady perseverance, win the prize. We see, by a thousand luminous examples, how much a regular plan and long-continued industry can achieve for one. By the "History of the Pursuit of Knowledge under Difficulties," and the record of geniuses who have illuminated the world, we are taught that moral rule of three, that more gains more, and less loses even the less. Homer was a travelling minstrel; Terence, a slave; Columbus, a weaver; Ferguson, a shepherd; Niebuhr, a peasant; Ben Jonson, a bricklayer; Burns, a ploughman; George Fox, a shoemaker; Cervantes, a soldier; Howard, a grocer; Franklin, a printer; Defoe, a hosier; Hogarth, an engraver of pewter pots; Shakspeare, a play-actor;

Washington, a surveyor ; and Louis Philippe a schoolmaster. It was not genius, or fortune only, that have made these names great among men, but steadiness and direction to the master plan of life. Every young man ought to read two things, Foster's Essay on "Decision of Character," and Robert Burns's "Poetical Epistle to a Young Friend," concluding with these three stanzas : —

- "The great Creator to revere
Must sure become the creature ;
But still the preaching cant forbear,
And e'en the rigid feature :
Yet ne'er with wits profane to range
Be complaisance extended ;
An athiest's laugh's a poor exchange
For Deity offended.
- "When ranting round in Pleasure's ring,
Religion may be blinded ;
Or if she gie a random sting,
It may be little minded ;
But when on life we're tempest-driven,
A conscience but a canker —
A correspondence fixed with Heaven
Is sure a noble anchor.
- "Adieu, dear, amiable youth !
Your heart can ne'er be wanting ;
May prudence, fortitude, and truth,
Erect your brow undaunting !

In ploughman phrase, ‘ God send you speed ’
Still daily to grow wiser ;
And may you better reck the rede,
Than ever did th’ adviser.”

To have an aim in life gives steadiness and direction to the thoughts. It leads to the diligent improvement of time ; so that the moments are prized as grains of gold washing down the river of Life into the ocean of Eternity. It habituates the whole man to act in concert easily and efficiently. It sets all the tides and currents of our being flowing in one channel and one direction, and their momentum is irresistible. It enables us to surmount with despatch those obstacles which would otherwise rise like Andes in our path. It constitutes a living staple, which joins in one grand harmonious whole all the various efforts, circumstances, and tendencies of our being ; and in union there is strength.

An aim is essential not only in business and our calling in life, but in social intercourse, in intellectual culture, and religious duties. We ought to mark out our course, and put our foot down, and not be driven about by every wind of doctrine. True, we

should play the fool more than the sage, if we did not keep the mind open to new truth, and correct our sailing by ever fresh observations of the heavens of God, and the compass of earth ; but it is a very pitiful life to pass, to live along in a careless, slipshod negligence, snatch the chance good of the moment, be governed by the impulse of the senses, and the accidental tone of surrounding society. Have an aim for every day, for every year, and for the whole life. Live for some high and worthy object, as it respects your character and influence in society. I do not say, aim at office or honor ; I would rather dissuade you from proposing to yourselves any of the brilliant ambitious prizes the community has to bestow on her favorite sons ; but put your mark high to secure the solid esteem of your fellow-men by being just, and true, and fearless ; forbearing to all, and overbearing to none. It is said of the Savior himself, in his youth, that he “ increased in favor with God and man.”

So in self-education, and spiritual culture, keep before you the lofty eye-mark of a reasonable and immortal being ; seek to know not what you wish merely, but what you

want, what you need ; understand yourselves, and then march straight-forward, with a firm and manly step, to reach the end in view. Half of our time is prone to be wasted in doing nothing, and a large part of the other half in doing we know not what. If we desire a better education than we have yet been able to attain, wishing alone will be a slow method to gain it. We must apply the means, and do the thing, as well as talk and speculate about it. It will not answer to be mere ideologists, builders of fine castles in the air, but we must be workers in earnest. We must procure the books, attend the lectures and meetings, do the thinking, shape the habits and tastes after a noble model, and then we shall not be mere delvers on wood, and iron, and leather, and paper, and cloth, and clods of the earth ; serfs bound to the soil, galley-slaves chained to the oar ; but men, minds, living, burning, radiating souls ; hearts large, wise, and strong, and growing larger, wiser, and stronger.

Tell me not this is impracticable. It has been demonstrated in cases without number of the humble and unknown, as well as of the sons of genius and glory. What man

has done man may do, is but half a truth ; man may do, and, by the law of progress in the individual and in society, he ought to do, more than man has ever done. To the wonders of steam and magnetic telegraphs, and daguerreotypes, in the outward world, there ought to be some triumphs in education to correspond in the inward. Let there be schools, not only for children, but schools for adults. They are already forming, in some of our cities. Let us not be ashamed to confess that we have not finished our education ; nay, more, hold the heresy that we will not finish it until death ; that we will be ever learning and ever coming to the knowledge of some new truth ; that, brushing aside the butterfly tribe of fictions in yellow covers, and other paper nonsense, we will take a strong hold of that old and experienced teacher, History ; of that domestic monitress, Biography ; of that celestial queen, Poetry ; of that star-eyed angel, Science ; and of that sturdy workman, Art. They can give us lessons that will tell on life, that will not only butter our bread, but make the earth seem a richer earth, and the heavens more glorious, and man more inter-

esting, and the Creator mightier in his works and nearer in his love.

Study is infinite, and knowledge is infinite, and the invitation is, "Ho ! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money ; come ye, buy and eat, without money, and without price."

In this aim of personal improvement, let us go to work with a somewhat dogged perseverance ; and with books or without them, in school or out, earlier or later, let us feel that an ignorant young man is a combination of terms that ought not to exist in this land running over with privileges ; and that, so far as we can individually or socially prevent it, it shall not exist here. And if, rising above all literary or scientific cultivation, we would reach after the harmonious development and the supreme excellence of our being, then we shall look with steady eyes of faith and obedience to that Heavenly Teacher and Savior, who can instruct us in all we ought to know, and guide us in all we ought to do, pertaining to our eternal destiny.

The world is full of objects of beauty and grandeur. The Almighty has moulded mat-

ter in lines of beauty and steeped it in colors of paradise. We can look out of our east windows at sunrise and see a picture which it immortalizes a painter even to copy imperfectly : so glorious is the golden reality ! Moonlight and starlight ; the green fields, and summer flowers ; the sheaves of harvest, and the icicles of winter — all, all things are beautiful in their season ! Blessed be his name, who suffers so much of brightness to linger around so sinful a world ! But we look upon a really nobler sight than star or flower, or any mere material object, when we behold a young man of stainless purity, lofty aim, and incorruptible integrity. The patriot beholds him ; and in evil times, and cast upon evil tongues, his country's hope again beats warm at his heart. The aged pronounce a mental thanksgiving every time they see his manly form, and bless Heaven that the rising sun is even more glorious than the setting. The philanthropist dwells on the vision with gladness, and hails the advent of new powers to roll back the tide of cruelty and wrong that has so long flooded the earth. The Christian rejoices with trembling, lest so rich a prize should tempt the

enemy ; and he prays without ceasing, that the unspotted mirror of youth may never be tarnished by the breath of pollution.

As a son, a brother, a friend, the young man occupies a signal station for weal or woe to many around his domestic and social circle. A gentle sister looks to him for counsel and sympathy. A widowed mother leans upon his stout young arm for support. A decrepit father depends upon the filial respect and virtuous conduct of his son, for no small part of his remaining happiness on earth. A brother finds in his unwavering virtue a prop to his own character. A friend reënforces his failing purposes of duty at the quenchless fires of his magnanimous nature. Men look to him, and prophesy good of him. They cast his horoscope without fear. The unworn energies of his noble spirit act with wondrous life on the dull clay of humanity. He brings anew the Promethean torch from heaven, to kindle the waning embers of enterprise and goodness. He is a bulwark of strength, and a tower of defence. Nobleness sits enthroned on his brow, and generosity lights up his eye. His hand has the pressure of friendship in its cordial grasp. His words

are hearty, and his looks sincere. He may be heir to none of the riches, candidate for none of the honors, and competitor for none of the places of society ; but he is something better than either, or all ; he is a man. "When the ear hears him, then it blesses him ; and when the eye sees him, it gives witness to him." I see the patron genius of his country invest him with the beautiful mantle of liberty ; I behold the angel of Religion encircling his head with the starry "crown of righteousness."

LECTURE IV.

THE MORAL DUTIES OF YOUNG MEN.

IN entering upon the fourth and last lecture of this course, so many interesting and important topics press upon our attention, that it is difficult to select and arrange them without doing injustice to some, or wholly leaving out others.

The improvement of Time is one of the fundamental duties of our condition. No plan of life can avail any thing, which leaves out of view this element of power and success. The days and nights, which the Creator sublimely marks on the face of the sky by the stupendous clockwork of sun, and moon, and stars, ought not surely to run to waste. The days are given for useful action, and the nights for rest and reinvigoration; and these benevolent ordinations cannot be

set aside with impunity. Every hour is a treasure, every moment a gem ; and as has been quaintly said, God teaches us the value of each, by giving us but one at a time. A good and happy life consists much less in any great triumphs and gains, than in the steady employment of our time in the faithful discharge of our duties. Some mark down on a memorandum what they will do each part of the day, in order to prevent their precious hours from being frittered away in idleness or trifling concerns ; and others, that do not go through with that formality, yet sketch on the living tablet of the mind their daily plan of action. At the close of each day, also, it is well to consider how far we have kept our good resolutions, and what report the passing hours have borne on high, of talents wasted or improved. Unless the powers both of body and mind are industriously exercised, they lose the tone of health. The sluggard vegetates, not lives. He is a sleeper and digester, but not a man. Nothing better tends to clear the mind of those dark, dull vapors, that sometimes shroud its horizon, than a good north-west breeze of enterprise and useful toil. Good hard work,

if not too hard, is better for health than the nostrums of the apothecary. This drives out of the system all the bad humors, and sends the gladdening sensations of strength and cheerfulness into every vein and muscle of the body, and every chamber of the heart. The loafer, as he is technically called, is necessarily a wretched being ; not only because he fails to secure those comforts which are the rewards of industry, but because he suffers his being to stagnate. While the laborer in the various walks of life is using his time for the object for which it was given, he earns a sweeter enjoyment than can be found in all the halls of wealth and indolence. His plain food is relished better than the exquisite viands of Apicius. His rest at night is more refreshing than if he slept on beds of Gothland down. In the language of Carlyle, “ We must all toil, or steal, (howsoever we name our stealing,) which is worse ; no faithful workman finds his task a pastime. The poor is hungry and athirst, but for him also there is food and drink ; he is heavy laden and weary, but for him also the heavens send sleep, and of the deepest. In his smoky cribs, a clear, dewy

heaven of rest envelops him, and fitful glitterings of cloud-skirted dreams."

We can live but one life on earth, and it should be our highest ambition that that single golden opportunity be not lost; yea, that no part, even the most inconsiderable of it, should be wasted, as it passes by us from the curtained future into the irrevocable past. Titus, the Roman emperor, once said, "I have lost a day; for to-day I have done no good thing." It has been well remarked, that that day was not lost; for it gave birth to a sentiment, that has echoed through all succeeding ages, giving both to young and old a lesson of inestimable worth. All noble attainments in business, or education, or character, are the product of time, rightly valued and steadily improved. Time is money, is knowledge, virtue, salvation; for they all depend on its faithful use. "So number your days, that you may apply your hearts unto wisdom." Loss of time is loss of being, a species of moral suicide. It is a solemn reflection, that there is no amends for time misemployed. It is gone forever; no tears nor groans can call forth the resurrection of our departed days. The only

good they can now confer is to animate the dormant feelings of penitence and reformation, and quicken us to a more diligent improvement of the future. When you have learned, my young friends, how to prize the moments as they fly at their full value, and to put off till to-morrow nothing which you can do to-day, you will have mastered the grand secret of human success and happiness. In the "Night Thoughts" of Young are many brilliant passages bearing upon this subject; and the following strain, by a distinguished American poet, ought to be familiar to all. It is entitled "The Psalm of Life; what the heart of the young man said to the Psalmist."

"Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

"Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
'Dust thou art, to dust returnest,'
Was not spoken of the soul.

"Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day

“Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

“In the world’s broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

“Trust no Future, howe’er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,—act, in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o’erhead!

“Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footsteps on the sands of time;—

“Footsteps, that perhaps another,
Sailing o’er life’s solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

“Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.”

The formation of Habits is another point,
which demands the early and assiduous at-

tention of every young man. This subject has been hammered upon so often and long by moralists and preachers, that it has lost the gloss of novelty ; but it is none the less important for all that, and none the less should it enter largely into the consideration of every one who would not fail of life's great good. We may repeat a dozen times that habit is a second nature ; that the child is father to the man ; that like youth, like age ; but it is no easy task to induce the sanguine spirit of the young to believe it, and practise accordingly. It goes in at one ear and out at the other. Could they be made to understand — and may Heaven grant its aid — that in the first ten, fifteen, or twenty years, they stamp the character for time, perhaps for eternity, they would pursue very different lines of conduct from what we now witness in many young persons. Could they pungently feel that what is now fluid will soon be solid, and what is now muscle will be bone, they would take more pains in moulding and modelling their habits after the noblest pattern.

The Creator has compounded our nature with high capacities and with fearful pro-

pensities — all for good — all for use — all for happiness — not a single one of which can be spared without marring the matchless whole, yet liable, imminently liable, to go far astray, and therefore requiring a constant hand upon the reins, an open eye upon the way, and a soul strong in God. For when we look around us upon the victims of appetite and passion, torn, and plagued, and harassed to death by some monstrous desire and habit they have been nursing into strength and fury, — here one with a thirst like a leech for strong drink, and there one with a raging lust for forbidden pleasures; here a greediness for riches which all the treasures of kingdoms could not satisfy, and there an irritable temper that catches fire like tinder at every little trouble; here a proud self-will, that will break before it will bend, the fruit of perhaps an indulged childhood, and there a green-eyed jealousy, that poisons the sweetest cup of life with its infernal look, — when we see these perverted natures, we weep mingled tears of pity and indignation, that men should be so taken in, that they should neglect the beginnings of evil, and deem life only a pleasant holiday,

and no urgent work of a moral kind to be done to prevent so awful a consummation. O, how inexpressibly mournful that they did not earlier apply the master's hand while it had power to tame the lion's brood, and soothe the ferocity of the animal nature ! that they did not listen to those kind voices that whispered from heaven, and were reverberated from the inmost depths of their hearts ! — "Children of mortality, beware, beware ! — Play with serpents, play with fire, but tamper not with the tremendous passions of your lower nature. They may now be weak, and a little wrong indulgence may seem to be a very harmless thing, and you may wonder that Scripture has laid such strict commands upon you, and walled about its laws with a wall of fire ; but it is death to give these desires habitual gratification. They only require license to grow paramount in your bosom, to monopolize all the nutriment and strength of your constitution, and prey, like the vampire, on the blood of the soul. They only demand a lifetime of uncurbed dominion to become dragons that will track the earth with fire, consume every interest of home, country, and heaven, and

pull down the immortal soul into the pit of perdition." Alas! when we consider how many have been ruined, body and soul, by neglecting their early habits, and living along carelessly, thinking that it was an easy and pleasant thing to live, and required no great effort, no vigilant attention to the forming character; that it was a very small task to take care of one's self, much less than to oversee a shop, or garden, or farm; that all would come out about right at last; that God was good, and would not punish very severely a few small sins; and that there was no occasion for making much ado about the conduct and character; — when we see myriads wretched, myriads dying, myriads worse than dead, — we feel that we should call upon all the good spirits of heaven to help, and the arm of God to be again bared for the salvation of his creatures, and the thrilling words of the Savior heard once more in their more than mortal emphasis, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat."

The aged cannot go back and rectify the mistakes of their youth. "What is written

is written ; ” what is done is done. But you, my young friends, have the glorious opportunity of shunning those rocks upon which others have split. If you will now pay attention to the formation of your habits, you can nip a thousand sins and woes in the bud. Some habits, good or bad, we must form ; the only question open to our decision is, whether we will secure those which will be props to our character, and which by repetition will grow more and more agreeable, and constitute the most unalloyed happiness of which man in the present state is capable ; or whether we will rivet upon ourselves those fetters of vice, which, gathering strength year by year, the vigor of manhood and the maturity of age will finally be unable to burst asunder. And if we are now rehearsing in time the part we are to act in eternity, who shall fathom the consequences of the good or evil habits we indulge in from day to day ?

Dr. Lyell, the distinguished English geologist, who delivered a course of Lectures before the Lowell Institute in Boston, and published a book of Travels in this country, remarks, “ Were I ever so unfortunate as to quit my native land, and reside permanently

elsewhere, I should choose, without hesitation, the United States for my next country, especially New England, where a population of more than two millions enjoys a higher average standard of prosperity and intellectual advancement than any other population of equal amount on the globe." And what has given our native land this proud pre-eminence? Is it a fertile soil, or a balmy climate, or the riches of mines of gold, and silver, and precious stones? No; for she has been taunted with producing nothing so abundantly as granite and ice. But it is because her first settlers were free, enlightened, and religious men, and established those institutions of Freedom, Education, and Religion, which have expanded and sanctified the mind and heart of successive generations. Whatever evils we may see here, we should witness vastly more elsewhere; and whatever of good we should find elsewhere, of the blessings of competence, and useful knowledge, and domestic purity and peace, and Christian piety, confined to particular sections or classes, is in New England diffused among all.

Such is the inheritance we have received

from our forefathers, and such, marred or improved, we shall transmit it to posterity. The grave question which presses upon the faithful conscience is, What shall be done to preserve, and perpetuate, and enhance this magnificent patrimony? In answer, it may be said, that nothing less than Freedom, Education, and Religion can insure the perpetuity of the institutions designed to uphold those interests themselves. There is action and reaction. The people must rally round their institutions, and the institutions, in return, will leaven and quicken the mighty mind of the nation. "Salt is good; but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves." The courts, and legislatures, and schools, and churches of New England are admirably fitted to govern, and guide, and elevate the mass of the people. Two hundred years of growth and prosperity attest their beautiful adaptation. But they will be like the salt that has lost its savor and the power either of preserving itself or any thing else, if the people do not continue to cherish and uphold them.

It depends upon you, therefore, young

men, and those of your age, to decide whether these instruments of sending the life-blood through the body, social, political, and religious, shall be sustained and improved, or shall drop into neglect, and lose their power over the land they have blessed. You owe, therefore, solemn duties, as patriots and Christians, to your native soil, and to the vast and increasing republic with which it is connected. This country has a great mission to perform in the progress of humanity. An American manhood ought to be something better than an African, an Asiatic, or even a European manhood. "To see that the republic suffer no detriment," to promote that Education which shall enlighten, that Freedom which shall deliver, and that Religion which shall sanctify twenty millions of the human family, and those our countrymen, breathing the same air, treading the same soil, and looking upon the same skies, must ever rank high on the scale of our duties.

It is idle to suppose that our good institutions are a species of machine endowed with perpetual motion, and able of themselves to go forever. Unless the national clock be

faithfully wound up at due seasons, it will run down and stop. Instead of perpetual motion, we shall have perpetual ruin, if the people are not enlightened and virtuous, and earnest in maintaining their free institutions. It is in vain to say that one's influence is small ; that little, in its place, is just as necessary as if it were the hinge on which the national destiny revolved. Every man must stand in his post, and do battle for right and truth, and the grand achievement, the national good, the world-wide blessing, is accomplished. Every brick in the wall, every thread in the garment, every stone in the arch, is essential to the perfection of the whole ; and not one can be taken away without weakening or destroying all the rest. Cherish like sentiments with regard to your duties as citizens and Americans. Cultivate large and high-souled purposes of usefulness, a calm moral courage, and a patriotism too generous to be tied up in the strings of party, and a philanthropy too Christ-like to allow itself to be restricted within any less limits than the universal brotherhood of man. "Young America" ought to be foremost "in whatsoever things are true, whatsoever

things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report." While "your old men" only "dream dreams" of memory, experience, and wisdom, "your sons and your daughters shall prophesy," saith the word, "and your young men shall see visions" — visions of truth, liberty, and progress, — visions beckoning them onward and upward in the path of improvement and glory. One generation goeth and another cometh, that the world may outgrow its old ideas, and with fresh energy execute new ones. But how fatally will this creative and progressive process be arrested, if the young men of this generation are not faithful to their high trust, and if, with blinded minds or sensualized hearts, they fail to receive these higher sentiments, which now begin to stir in the hearts of men, and to reform the kingdoms and hierarchies of the earth!

But never let the public exclude from your mind the Domestic Obligations. Let the young man never forget his home, and the sacred duties he owes to it. Let him never disdain it, however lowly or homely.

He may dwell in richer apartments, and be served with more circumstance in after life, but he will never find hearts that beat with a truer and warmer interest in his welfare than those of his early home. Let him not forget to honor his father and his mother, and, instead of hurrying away to follow his own fortunes, even before he is released by the laws of his country from his filial duties, let him give his young strength to lighten their burdens, his fresh hopes to illumine their darkening age. Let him, if possible, provide, too, for their support in their old age. We enter upon the duties of manhood in this country before we are men either in mind or body. Far better would it be to linger longer round the old roof-tree, knit the frame with firmer sinews, and store the mind with a richer education, and a riper experience, before plunging into the excitements and temptations of the world. Why do so many break down in the professions, why do so many fail in business, in proportion to the number which enters these walks of life, unless because, among other reasons, they undertook to be men when they were boys? "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke

in his youth ;” the yoke of parental discipline, of hardship, and “patient continuance in well-doing.”

And in after life, be not ashamed of your humble home, your humble family, and poor friends, if such were your lot. You may rise to wealth and fame, but never forget those to whom you once owed every thing. If educated, be not ashamed of their ignorance ; if rich, of their poverty ; if initiated into refined society, of their plain but honest manners. Poor will be the exchange, if you gain the pomps and pleasures of life at the expense of the simplicity of character and the sound, affectionate heart which you carried from your native hills.

The honorable treatment of the Female Sex has thus far been a hopeful symptom in the American character. Even the foreign traveller, lavish of his abuse upon our manners and morals, has not failed to pause and admire the considerate and respectful attention, and the polite courtesy, of our people in this particular. It is a redeeming trait, and compensates for many follies. And it is for those who are rapidly going forward and taking their places in the ranks

of a new generation, to see to it that this high grace of society fall not into neglect, but grow apace with the progressive civilization of the age. There is nothing that sooner marks a young man as a candidate for low vices, than rude conduct towards woman ; towards his own mother, it is sacrilege ; towards sisters and female friends, barbarity ; and towards others, meanness without palliation. There is a hollow-hearted flattery, which some use, who think others as great fools as themselves ; there is a polished suavity, which may plot ruin, while it speaks honeyed words ; there is a fickle-minded admiration, which is all devotion one day, and all coldness the next ; there is a lofty air of condescension, which as good as says, " See how attentive and polite we, lords of the creation, are to the weaker sex ; " and there is a formal squareness of manners, that bows just so low, and walks on the right side, and gives the arm, or the hand, at the proper moment, without one throb of honest respect. I need not say that it is none of these spurious forms of courtesy of which I now speak, but of that delicate and high-minded reverence that honors woman as the

equal of man. It is time this folly had come to an end, of speaking of her, and of treating her, as if she were something more or less than human. The respect to be paid her is not a gift, but a debt. Not on account of difference, but of identity, is she to be honored as are all other human beings.

In Conversation, high and grave topics of discussion will better please your female associates than the idle frivolities of speech which some persons use, as if they thought it the only language which ladies could understand. Be assured no woman will feel complimented to be addressed in a style that indicates your belief in the Mohammedan doctrine of her nature. Every one who desires the elevation of society must be anxious to have the tone of conversation raised, and the intercourse of immortal beings something more than bandying compliments and flatteries, or going round and round in the same dull routine of every-day topics. Let a high note be struck, and human breasts will respond and reëcho the strain. It devolves upon those young persons, of both sexes, who are now forming their manners and habits, and assuming their places in society,

to aim at a high standard in this respect, and, while they avoid stiffness and pedantry, to strive to make the common intercourse of life an instrument of the noblest moral and intellectual culture, as well as of the most refined happiness.

But I must hasten to the last principal subject of these Lectures, without which all the other remarks would be but as a house without a foundation, or a column without a capital. Religion, by which I mean, of course, Christianity, is so thoroughly wrought into the whole texture of society, constituting the sanction of our laws, and the regulator of our opinions and habits, that no young man can have arrived at years of discretion, without being powerfully influenced by it, in some way or other, in matters relating to his conduct and happiness, and without forming some judgment, favorable or unfavorable to its claims. It is a subject which hardly admits of neutrality. We must be friends or enemies. "He that is not with me," said the Savior, "is against me ; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Indifference is often opposition of the worst kind. We may suppose, then, that you

are either on one side or the other of this question ; and every ingenuous heart must, of course, wish to be on the side of truth and duty. Here is a vast subject affecting conduct, happiness, and our eternal destiny, and it would seem no one could rest contented without making up his mind upon it, deliberately and prayerfully. I stand not here to recommend this or that system of belief, or to proclaim any sectarian views, but to take a higher position, and to speak of that "common Christianity" in which all sects agree. And I utter the opinion without hesitation, that the young man who does not attend to this great law of life, this only anchor upon immortality, is guilty of neglecting his own highest good, and of displeasing the kind Benefactor on whom he depends for every breath he draws. He cannot be innocent who dwells in a land of Bibles and Sabbaths, of schools and churches, and, amidst this all-diffusive, all-cheering light of heavenly love, closes his intellect and his heart to the gracious appeal. No ; let me rather be a follower of Confucius, or a believer in Boodh, than incur the fearful responsibility of being an infidel in a land of Chris-

tian freedom and faith. It is a matter of rejoicing that skepticism is not so fashionable among young men as at the commencement of the present century. But it is by no means extinct ; it lurks in the by-ways of society ; its poison is circulated in surreptitious papers and books. But its arguments have been so conclusively answered, that its main attack now is on the morals and principles of the young, aware that, if it can persuade them to live as skeptics, they will not be backward to accept the skeptic's creed. For a bad life will soon furnish reasons for rejecting God and his commandments. Yet, that you may not be unprepared to meet the plausible reasonings, as well as expose the immoralities, of infidelity, you need to make yourselves acquainted with the Evidences of Christianity. Ponder well the learned arguments of Butler, Paley, Palfrey, and the Bridgewater Treatises, and they will invigorate the understanding, as well as elevate the heart.

The office of Religion is twofold — to restrain the passions, and to cultivate the spiritual nature, consisting of reason, conscience, affection, and aspiration ; to check

the evil, and prompt the good. Let us insist on these points.

We have already viewed the Moral Dangers by which you are surrounded — the Recklessness, the False Ideas of life, the Intemperance, Profaneness, Impurity, Sabbath-breaking, Love of Popularity, of Amusements, Gambling, Extravagance, the thirst for Money, the lack of Self-Respect, and of a High Aim in life, and the Spirit of Insubordination. No one can deny the existence of these besetting sins. They knock at our doors, they walk into our houses, they dim the fine gold of youth, and cast its beautiful crown into the dust. They are terrible, because they steal unawares upon their victim. No young man sets out with the expectation that he shall ever be a drunkard or libertine, a gambler or miser, a rioter or murderer; but he carelessly enters those devious paths which carry him farther and farther from virtue, until they end in ruin. Temptations are insidious and omnipresent. As there cannot be a perfect vacuum made in the atmosphere, so there cannot be a place found entirely free from moral peril. If the sins of youth marched forward in Macedonian

phalanx, they would be seen and shunned. But they insinuate themselves, with serpentine windings, into the deep mazes of the heart. They have no rattle to give warning, but strike in the moment of fancied security. Sometimes they take the guise of hope, and again they mingle in the dark throng of our fears. They now descend in the instant shock of the earthquake, during the stillness of a breathless noonday; and now they spread their fatal influence on the invisible wings of "the pestilence that walketh in darkness." Alas for him that is sleeping on his post! How true the poetic warning! —

"Awake, my soul! lift up thine eyes;
See where thy foes against thee rise,
In long array, a numerous host;
Awake, my soul! or thou art lost.

"Here giant Danger threatening stands,
Mustering his pale, terrific bands;
There Pleasure's silken banners spread,
And willing souls are captive led.

"See where rebellious passions rage,
And fierce desires and lusts engage;
The meanest foe of all the train
Has thousands and ten thousands slain.

“Thou tread'st upon enchanted ground;
Perils and snares beset thee round;
Beware of all; guard every part;
But most, the traitor in thy heart.”

And the safeguard, the only safeguard, which earthly friendship or divine wisdom can suggest, is beautifully described in the next lines.

“Come, then, my soul! now learn to wield
The weight of thine immortal shield;
Put on the armor from above,
Of heavenly truth and heavenly love.”

We have also seen the immense power of Habit, joining with these volcanic passions of our nature, and riveting the shackles of sin. We have seen how the fond mariner will tempt that Maelstrom, whose outer circles, as he rides round and round, give only the sensation of a charming variety and undulation, but whose centre, to which he is rapidly driven on beyond the reach of human aid, boils madly round the rocks of destruction. Let him beware lest the first cry of danger be the shriek of despair.

For passion, then, and appetite, for temptation, and the power of evil habits, we need the help of Heaven; and that help has been

mercifully given in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the influences of the Holy Spirit of God. Let not the unspeakable boon be despised or neglected.

But Christianity not only delivers from sin, — it raises to holiness. While it is a preventive and pardoner, it is also a creator. This is its second office. It is the appointed instrument and motive of all moral and spiritual culture. Appealing to man by the mercy of God and the cross of Christ, by the opportunity of this life, and the sanction of immortality, it would awaken every hope, and fear, and desire, of his nature, to work out his salvation. It would call forth the dormant energies of the soul. It would prompt him to pray, and labor, and toil, and strive, and suffer, and persevere, that he may not fail of the infinite prize. It strengthens that reason which distinguishes us from the instinct of brutes, and enables it to choose a distant moral good, rather than an immediate sensual gratification. It vivifies and enlightens conscience, which is liable to become dulled by neglect, until it can cut no clearly-marked line of distinction between right and wrong. It cherishes love to God, and man, and

Christ, and thus meets the wants of our affections. It places before us a perfect example in the life and character of our Lord, and directs our highest aspiration heavenwards, saying, "Be ye perfect as God is perfect." This is but a brief sketch of the manner in which Christianity promotes self-culture ; thus on one side doing away, through the mercy of God in Christ, and the sincere repentance of the offender, with the evil of sin ; and, on the other, making ample provision for the largest expansion and loftiest exercise of all the moral and spiritual capacities of our immortal nature.

You speak yourselves, in the letter addressed to me to request the delivery of these Lectures, of "looseness of principle," as the cause of evils which are there deprecated, and of others that are feared. It is an expressive phrase ; for, when principle is loose, all is loose. Principle ! I like the term, and thank you for suggesting it. It is the true word. It signifies what is at the beginning. Principles are the preliminaries and rudiments of all arts and sciences, and they should take the lead in the great science and art of living. There can be no substantial

and well-assured virtue, no steadfast goodness, without correct religious principles. He who, in his unerring wisdom, adapted the eye to the light, and bread to the stomach, each to the other, with more exceeding mercy attempered the truths and motives of Christianity to the wants and weaknesses of the soul. Wherever there is laxity of principle, there is a rivet loose in the machinery of life, the balance-wheel is broken, and all runs to disorder and confusion. We do our fellow-men more good by introducing good principles into their minds, than by giving them hundreds of gold and silver. We open fountains of life and peace in their own bosoms, which can make amends for the loss of every earthly possession.

But the value of pure and undefiled religion is demonstrated in the poor success with which men in general live, who renounce sound moral principles. Some endeavor to substitute Interest as the mainspring of a virtuous character ; but we see mankind wantoning in vice, in the face and eyes of interest. We witness men quarrelling away their property, and a good conscience, flatly

against their interest. Interest is strong, but, like the green withes of the Philistines against Samson, it will give way before a stronger. Again, Honor is cried up by others as the stronghold of virtue. Doubtless, it helps to keep those who have forsworn higher motives of conduct within the limits of a decent morality. But for a mainstay to character, it is a shadow of shadows, and a vapor of vapors. Honor! There is nothing so horrible or base, which men have not done under its sanction. For it, man has imbued his hands in the blood of his friend, in single combat, upon the occasion of some trifling difficulty; for the same bubble of air, nation has risen up against nation, and shed rivers of gore; and, for the same empty and lying pretence, mankind still seem willing to act over again the old scenes of wickedness. Yet others appeal to Experience and Prudence to guide their feet; but their light shines but a little way, and can shed not a ray upon those unforeseen and untried emergencies which are continually coming upon us in our journey through the world. Some may be propped up, from falling into abject vice, by the surrounding influence of

virtuous friends and a Christian community. But none of these temporary helps will uplift the soul to a majestic virtue, nor effectually guard it against the hosts of sin. There is, no doubt, such a thing as an enlightened self-interest, and a pure sense of honor; but the qualities usually miscalled by those names are utterly inadequate to buttress the fragile character of man against the tremendous assaults of temptation. Something more potent must intervene to strengthen the weak and raise the fallen. Only the heartfelt appeal of the gospel, its rock-built faith, its hope laying hold of immortality, its boundless love, its promises, brighter than life, and its warnings, darker than death, can so operate upon and arouse the soul as to work out its salvation, and give it the everlasting triumph over moral evil.

Do not yield, my friends, to an opinion, prevailing in some circles, that religion is unmanly. It is the only surety of a true manhood, the friend of all genuine manliness, and nobleness of character. It cherishes all those unselfish, magnanimous, self-denying sentiments, which constitute the true hero. The poet never uttered a deeper

thought than he did in saying that "Christian is the highest style of man."

And do not fall into the common, but dreadful fallacy, that religious thoughts and duties are not for you, but belong to a later period of life. It is the sophistry of an evil spirit. Now, now is the very season, when you most need the advice and guidance of the heavenly Teacher. Youth is the precious hour of instruction, self-culture, and self-formation. The present fleeting span is the moment to fix deep in the heart those moral convictions and sentiments which all the tempests of life shall not be able to uproot. Not need religion! Then you do not need light, and air, and heat, and bread, and drink; for to such essentials was it likened by him who spake as never man spake. "For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life." How directly, and with what affectionate personality, indeed, has the word of God spoken to your case! Harken to some of its beautiful sentences.

"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto, according to thy word."

"I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me."

“Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded.”

“I have written unto you, young men,” said the apostle John, who, when himself a young man, was the beloved disciple of Jesus, “because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.”

“Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the light of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.”

“Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.”

My friends, there are two roads opening before you in life, — one right, and the other wrong. You cannot travel both. Beginning seemingly near together, they end far apart. Choose the right one, and it will conduct you as surely to final peace and an exceeding great happiness, as any cause will lead to its effect. Pursue the wrong one, and it will as certainly draw you downwards

to shame and woe. There are few affairs or questions in life in which moral elements are not involved. There is a right method, and a wrong one — of living from day to day, of pursuing our business, or studies, or recreations, and of conversing and acting with our fellow-men. Moral neutrality is a moral impossibility. The grand, critical choice of life, therefore, is to select the true course, and steadfastly follow it; to rise above the fear of ridicule, the laugh of the scorner, the sneer of the worldling, and say distinctly and firmly, like a man, “I am for order, I am for religion.” Even the poor wretch, who has so far forgot himself as to blaspheme his Maker, and scoff at the most solemn interests of humanity, will, in his remnant of a heart, secretly honor such magnanimity. Much more will the sweet internal witness of an approving conscience and a reconciled God put its seal to your choice.

I might speak of the Means and Duties of Religion, as Prayer, Reading the Scriptures, Meditation, and the Gospel Ordinances; but they are often urged elsewhere, and I forbear.

Finally, press home upon the conscience

the all-important question, "Am I going right or wrong?" for, if wrong, there is a better reason for changing the course than could be given by seven wise men; and, if right, a better argument for perseverance than could be invented by all the metaphysicians. The eternal voice of duty, in the heart, must be heard and obeyed, if we would not take up our habitation in the flame of remorse. Fearlessly espouse the cause of truth and righteousness, "quit you like men, be strong." Dwelling amid the fair abodes of a Christian civilization, never forget that while much is done for you, much remains for you to do for yourselves. At times you may be discouraged, — who has not his darker hours? — but "be of good cheer, let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." In the struggles of daily trial, the spirit wings itself for a loftier flight heavenwards. At all times, act up to the dignity and responsibility of immortals. Never sell your birth-right for a mess of pottage.

In the relations of society, as employers and employed, as rich and poor, learned and unlearned, influential or obscure, learn the noble lesson, To bear and forbear. Be not

envious of those above, nor insolent to those below. Speak the truth without fear or flattery. Revere the sanctity of an oath. Rush not into temptations which may prove more than a match for the strength of your principles. Be patriots without anger, and Christians without cant. Avoid the extremes of heat and cold in opinion and action ; a frozen indifference and a red-hot enthusiasm. Do not hastily condemn men's motives, though you may differ from their sentiments. See something good in every body, — for there is something good in every body, — and learn that wisdom from each which each one is able to impart. The little child, the beggar in the street, the most illiterate, the most vicious, can give us lessons. Cherish generous and comprehensive views upon all subjects, and aspire to a wise and dignified manhood, becoming a Christian and an American. "Take heed to yourselves." Have the ambition to give the world a more faultless type of character than it has been familiar with hitherto. Walking abroad in this glorious New World, released from the manacles and fetters of the Old, Freedom's soil beneath you, and Faith's boundless skies

above you, dare to be nobler and better men than the trembling vassals of an autocrat, or the crushed victims of an inquisition, or the subjects of the milder forms of political and ecclesiastical tyranny on the eastern continent.

My task is done. My word is uttered. If I should know that it had been the means, under divine Providence, of arresting one young person in a life of folly and sin, and inclining his heart to the love of virtue, and communion with God, I should deem it ample recompense for the labor incurred. And if I should never know that any individual had thus been influenced by these remarks, I should yet humbly trust that some good impressions have been made that will endure ; some new views and motives thrown into the mass of causes acting around you, to prompt you to sterling manliness of life and character. I have spoken, not as a censor, or spy, or critic, but as a friendly and affectionate adviser, as a brother to brethren. And if there is one present, who has wandered into evil courses heretofore, most earnestly and tenderly would I expostulate with him, and entreat him, with fraternal love, to turn

over a new leaf in the register of life, and take a fresh start in a better direction.

My brother, never give up the idea and the resolution of amendment, with the erroneous idea that none care for you, or pray for you, and that you are a castaway from human sympathies, and it is impossible for you to regain the esteem which you have forfeited by misconduct. Your friends are ready again to give you their respect, and the community its confidence, whenever they see you "ceasing to do evil, and learning to do well." God is waiting to be gracious. Arise, then, and shake off the dust, and stand erect once more in the posture of a true manhood. O, strive, strive to amend, to improve, and the wishes of all good men, yea, even of the bad, and rejoicings of the angels of God, will go with you. "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance." But should you pursue the dark and downward path of vice, and incur its dreadful penalties, you cannot say that you were not forewarned by human caution ; that you were not entreated

by human love to repent and reform ; you cannot, moreover, deny that solemn commands, apostolic remonstrances, as if with a trumpet blown by more than mortal mouth, proclaimed from God, uttered from eternity, have been sounded in your ears, “ Flee youthful lusts, but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace.”

My friends, I seem to hear the magnanimous resolve rising up and uttering itself in your souls. I please myself with the hope that you will yield your conviction to the reasoning, your hearts to the appeal. There is a pledge already given in the punctuality of your attendance, and the fixedness of your attention, that you will not suffer your better impressions to die away and vanish “like the morning cloud and the early dew,” but that they will abide, pierce the conscience, kindle the heart, and carry you onward to a better and happier life on earth, and to the unutterable blessedness of heaven. So help you God !

APPENDIX.

“THAT IN THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES
EVERY WORD MAY BE ESTABLISHED.”

A.

(Page 28.)

“WE see the evil of indelicacy of feeling and sentiment, and the extreme strictness and severity of the law respecting the intercourse of the sexes, Matt. v. 28. And yet what law is more frequently violated? By obscene anecdotes and tales; by songs and gibes; by double meanings and innuendoes; by looks and gestures; by conversation, and obscene books and pictures — this law of the Savior is perpetually violated. If there is any one sentiment of most value for the comfort, the character, the virtuous sociability, of the young — one that will shed the greatest charm over society, and make it the most pure, — it is that which inculcates *perfect delicacy* and *purity* in the intercourse of the sexes. Virtue of any kind never blooms when this is not cherished. Modesty and purity once gone, every flower that would diffuse its fragrance over life, withers and dies with it. There is no one sin that so withers and blights *every* virtue; none that so enfeebles and prostrates every ennobling feeling of the soul, as to indulge in a

life of impurity. How should purity dwell in the heart, breathe from the lips, kindle in the eye, live in the imagination, and dwell in the intercourse of the young! An eternal, avenging God is near to every wanton thought; marks every eye that kindles with impure desire; and rolls the thunder of justice over every polluted soul; and is preparing woe for every violator of the laws of purity and chastity." — *Albert Barnes*.

B.

(Page 64.)

Abstract of Dr. Amos Twitchell's Lecture on the Habitual Use of Tobacco.

AT the meeting of the Western District New Hampshire Medical Society, at the Temperance House in Keene, May 5, 1842, Dr. Twitchell, having been appointed to address the meeting, selected for his subject the habitual use of tobacco, and its effects on the constitution.

In discussing this subject, the doctor first described the effects it has on the nervous system, particularly the nerves of involuntary motion — those whose function it is to carry on the action of the lungs, heart, and stomach. These nerves are placed beyond the power of the will, acting without our consciousness, in sleep as well as when awake. And it is on these, he said, the habitual use of tobacco produces its most pernicious effects, by paralyzing their action.

It first manifests itself in the respiration, which is imperfectly performed — the blood is not fully purified, and a sense of anxiety or incipient suffocation is felt; to relieve which a voluntary effort is made to expand the chest to take in more air; and every now and then a deep inspiration or sigh is the result, giving momentary relief.

But during sleep, especially when first going to sleep, the will not being so easily excited to action, the sense of suffocation is longer endured, till, at length, becoming urgent and painful, a degree of consciousness is awakened, the individual begins to feel his condition, and rouses, perhaps suddenly starts up in end in the bed in alarm, his heart palpitating violently; and, having obtained relief, soon goes to sleep, to pass through the same scenes again.

But as the habit continues, the whole nervous system becomes affected — the muscles become tremulous, the sensibilities diminish, respiration and the action of the heart become more imperfect, and suffocation more urgent; but consciousness now fails to be roused to put forth a voluntary effort for relief; and the poor abused and languishing nerves, whose office it is to stand sentinel at the fountains of life, obtaining no help from the muscles of volition, at last are compelled quietly to yield up the struggle; and the person is found dead in his bed, the cause not known. Yet it is a foolish sacrifice of life to the vile, but enchanting habit of using tobacco.

There are doubtless some few who are found dead from disease of the heart. But the doctor said he had for many years been extending his inquiries on this subject; that he had found almost

every individual, who had died during sleep, had long been in the habit of the free use of tobacco, and it was his full conviction that that was almost the only cause of such deaths.

The habitual use of tobacco, he said, was a most fruitful source of disease. And this would appear evident when we consider its effects upon the nervous system. It lowers down the power of those nerves on which life depends — the blood does not fully undergo that change in the lungs which respiration is designed to effect, and goes to the heart impure and purple — the heart has not its original power to send it forward in its circulation through the body, — and an impure, sluggish circulation is the consequence, which predisposes to almost every disease the human system is subject to.

Among the diseases caused by tobacco, the doctor enumerated palsy, inveterate nervous headache, palpitation of the heart, disease of the liver, indigestion, ulceration of the stomach, piles, and many others; and finally, he said, he hardly knew as there was any disease it did not at times produce. He did not undertake to assert, that all who use tobacco must necessarily have these diseases fully developed. But he said individuals often experienced annoying, and sometimes alarming symptoms, the result of tobacco, which render them infirm and wretched, while they are altogether ignorant of the cause. He mentioned giddiness, pain in the head, palpitation of the heart, faintness, and gnawing sensation of the stomach, neuralgic pains, trembling, sudden loss of strength, loss of recollection, starting in sleep, &c. &c.; that he had been called to prescribe

for a great many persons, whose diseases have spontaneously disappeared on their discontinuance of tobacco.

The particular form in which tobacco is used, is not of very material consequence. He thought tobacco more frequently produces palsy than all other causes, and that snuff is more likely to bring it on than any other form in which it is used; but that chewing is more injurious to the digestive organs, affecting them in a threefold way. It robs the stomach of the saliva, lessens its nervous power, and diminishes its peristaltic motion; and that all the cases he had seen of ulceration of the stomach were manifestly the effects of tobacco.

C.

(Page 86.)

*An Extract from a Charge by Judge Parker,
Chief Justice of New Hampshire.*

A CAUSE of the increase of crime, which lies at the foundation of all others, — which it is to be feared has a greater efficiency than at any previous period, — and which is perhaps destined to have a still wider influence, is to be found in the erroneous education and discipline of children.

We are exceedingly prone to run from one extreme to another. In the early settlement of this part of the country, and up to, and subsequent to, the period of the revolution, the discipline of the school and of the parental roof was

exceedingly strict; so much so, that there is no doubt that in many instances it proved to be pernicious to the subject of it; and the child whom kindness and benignity might have nurtured into a worthy citizen, was, by blows, or sternness and well-meant severity, converted into a hardened villain, and a curse to the community. This error of the age became palpable, and, like the sanguinary laws of that time, has in a great measure passed away; but it is to be feared that an extreme laxity of discipline has in many instances been substituted, which will prove much more prejudicial to the community than the severity which preceded it.

I am no advocate for that stern system of education which makes the parent a tyrant, and the child a slave; — which exacts obedience to all the commands of the master, at the peril of severe corporal punishment; — which renders the youth a hardened and obdurate outcast, because the discipline to which he has been subjected has made him ferocious, and dogged, and sullen; and prepares him to make war upon mankind, because of the aggression upon himself, and the punishment he has received beyond the measure of his deserts. But the opposite system of no government, which is founded on the self-stultification of the parents, in the admission that their education and experience have given them no more wisdom than their children possess without either education or experience, prepares their children for the commission of crime in a mode more effectual than the first.

The effects of this laxity show themselves in small beginnings, — perhaps in a disregard and

violation of the rights of others, by hootings, and noises of various descriptions, around public buildings, on the occasion of public meetings. A signal instance of its results fell under my observation very recently, in a village in this state, upon the occasion of the time-honored observance of the Annual Fast. While the elders of the community, (or a portion of them, at least,) in pursuance of the designation of the day, and the recommendation of the executive, were assembling in their respective places of worship, a collection of boys, not inconsiderable in numbers, was evincing their want of parental control, and their disregard of the proprieties of the time, to the disturbance of others, by an exhibition of bats, and balls, and shoutings, and sports, not comporting with the solemnities of the occasion. The next stage in the career of recklessness and criminality may perhaps be some minor trespass upon a neighbor's goods, followed by nocturnal depredations upon a melon patch, or the robbing of a hen-roost; and these succeeded by offences of a higher grade, and a deeper dye.

Let those more immediately interested, and who have authority in the matter, look to it in time. Where there is not anarchy, there must be government of some kind. If the parents do not govern the children, the latter will govern the parents; and there is great reason to believe that a very considerable portion of this government already exists among us.

D.

(Page 93.)

“WE are aware, that there are some, who take an attitude of defence, when pressed with earnest applications on the subject of education. They think its importance overrated. They say, that circumstances chiefly determine the young mind, that the influence of parents and teachers is very narrow, and that they sometimes dwarf and distort, instead of improving the child, by taking the work out of the hand of nature. These remarks are not wholly unfounded. The power of parents is often exaggerated. To strengthen their sense of responsibility, they are often taught, that they are competent to effects which are not within their reach, and are often discouraged by the greatness of the task to which they are summoned. Nothing is gained by exaggeration. It is true — and the truth need not be disguised — that parents cannot operate at pleasure on the minds and characters of the young. Their influence is limited by their own ignorance and imperfection, by the strength and freedom of the will of the child, and by its connection, from its birth, with other objects and beings. Parents are not the only educators of their offspring, but must divide the work with other and numerous agents; and in this we rejoice; for, were the young confined to domestic influences, each generation would be a copy of the preceding, and the progress of society would cease. The child is not put into the hands of parents alone. It is not born to hear but a few

voices. It is brought at birth into a vast, we may say, an infinite school. The universe is charged with the office of its education. Innumerable voices come to it from all that it meets, sees, feels. It is not confined to a few books, anxiously selected for it by parental care. Nature, society, experience, are volumes opened every where and perpetually before its eyes. It takes lessons from every object within the sphere of its senses and its activity, from the sun and stars, from the flowers of spring and the fruits of autumn, from every associate, from every smiling and frowning countenance, from the pursuits, trades, professions of the community in which it moves, from its plays, friendships, and dislikes, from the varieties of human character, and from the consequences of its actions. All these, and more than these, are appointed to teach, awaken, develop the mind of the child. It is plunged amidst friendly and hostile influences, to grow by coöperating with the first, and by resisting the last. The circumstances in which we are placed, form, indeed, a most important school, and by their helps some men have arisen to distinction in knowledge and virtue, with little aid from parents, teachers, and books.

“Still the influence of parents and teachers is great. On them it very much depends, whether the circumstances which surround the child shall operate to his good. They must help him to read, interpret, and use wisely, the great volumes of nature, society, and experience. They must fix his volatile glance, arrest his precipitate judgment, guide his observation, teach him to link together cause and effect in the outward world, and turn his thoughts inward, on his own more mysterious nature.

The young, left to the education of circumstances, left without teaching, guidance, restraints, will, in all probability, grow up ignorant, torpid in intellect, strangers to their own powers, and slaves to their passions. The fact, that some children, without aid from parents or schools, have struggled into eminence, no more proves such aid to be useless, than the fact, that some have grown strong under physical exposures which would destroy the majority of the race, would prove the worthlessness of the ordinary precautions which are taken for the security of health.

“ We have spoken of parents as possessing, and as bound to exert, an important influence on the young. But they cannot do the whole work of education. Their daily occupation, the necessity of labors for the support of their families, household cares, the duty of watching over the health of their children, and other social relations, render it almost impossible for parents to qualify themselves for much of the teaching which the young require, and often deny them time and opportunity for giving instruction to which they are competent. Hence the need of a class of persons who shall devote themselves exclusively to the work of education. In all societies, ancient and modern, this want has been felt; the profession of teachers has been known; and to secure the best helps of this kind to children, is one of the first duties of parents; for on these the progress of their children very much depends.” — *W. E. Channing*.

THE END.

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